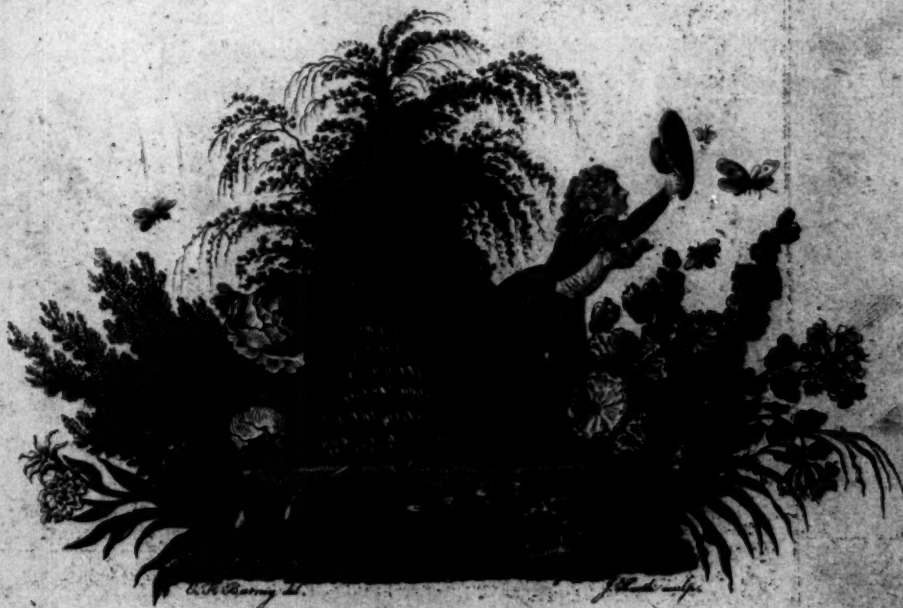


Elegant Extracts:
OR,
useful and entertaining
PASSAGES in PROSE,
Selected for the Improvement
of Young Persons:
being similar in Design to
ELEGANT EXTRACTS in POETRY.



Studio Fallente Laborem. Hor.

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A D V E R T I S E M E N T

TO THE SEVENTH AND LAST EDITION.

THERE cannot be a doubt but that a Book, like this, purposely adapted to the use of young persons of both sexes, copious beyond former examples, singularly various in its contents, selected from writers whose characters are established without controversy, abounding with entertainment and useful information, inculcating the purest principles of morality and religion, and displaying excellent models of style and language, must effectually contribute to the improvement of the **RISING GENERATION** in knowledge, taste, and virtue. The Public have, indeed, already felt and acknowledged by the least fallible proof, their general reception of it, its great utility. It has been adopted in all the most respectable places of education, and has sown the seeds of excellence, which may one day arrive at maturity, and add to the happiness both of the community and of human nature.

What **ENGLISH** book similar to this volume, calculated entirely for the use of young students at schools, and under private tuition, was to be found in the days of our fathers? None certainly. The consequence was, that the **ENGLISH PART** of education (to many the most important part) was defective even in places most celebrated for classic discipline; and boys were often enabled to read Latin perfectly, and write it tolerably, who, from the disuse, or the want of models for practice, were wretchedly qualified to do either in their native language. From this unhappy circumstance, classical education was brought into some degree of disgrace; and preposterous it certainly was, to study during many of the best years of life, foreign and dead languages, with the most scrupulous accuracy, and at the same time entirely to neglect that mother tongue, which is in daily and hourly requisition; to be well read in **TULLY**, and a total stranger to **ADDISON**; to have **HOMER** and **HORACE** by heart, and to know little more than the names of **MILTON** and **POPE**.

Classical learning, thus defective in a point so obvious to detection, incurred the imputation of pedantry. It was observed to assume great pride, the important air of superiority, without displaying, to the common observer, any just pretensions to it. It even appeared with marks of inferiority, when brought into occasional collision with well-informed understandings cultivated by English literature alone, but greatly proficient in the school of experience. Persons who had never drunk at the classic fountains, but had been confined in their education to English, triumphed over the scholar; and learning often hid her head in confusion, when pointed at as pedantry by the finger of a DUNCE.

It became highly expedient therefore to introduce more of English reading into our classical schools; that those who went out into the world with their coffers richly stored with the golden medals of antiquity, might at the same time be furnished with a sufficiency of current coin from the modern mint, for the commerce of common life: but there was no school book, copious and various enough, calculated entirely for this purpose. The Grecian and Roman History, the Spectators, and Plutarch's Lives, were indeed sometimes introduced, and certainly with great advantage. But still, an uniformity of English books in schools, was a desideratum. It was desirable that all the students of the same class, provided with copies of the same book, containing the proper variety, might be enabled to read it together, and thus benefit each other by the emulous study of the same subject or composition, at the same time, and under the eye of their common master.

For this important purpose, the large collections entitled "ELEGANT EXTRACTS," both in Prose and Verse, were projected and completed by the present Editor. Their reception is the fullest testimony in favour both of the design and its execution.

The labour of a Compiler of a book like this is indeed humble; but his beneficial influence is extensive; and he feels a pride and pleasure in the reflection that in this instance he has been serving his country most effectually, without sacrificing either to avarice or to vanity. The renown attending public services, is indeed seldom proportioned to their utility. Glitter is not always the most brilliant on the surface of the most valuable substance. The loadstone is plain and unattractive in its appearance, while the paste on the finger of the beau sparkles with envied lustre. The spade, the plough, the shuttle, have no ornament bestowed on them, while the sword is decorated with ribbands, gold, and



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and ivory. Yet REASON, undazzled in her decisions, dares to pronounce, while she holds the scales, that the USEFUL, though little praised, preponderates; and that the shewy and unsubstantial kicks the beam of the balance, while it attracts the eye of inconsiderate admiration.

Things intrinsically good and valuable have indeed the advantage of securing permanent esteem, though they may lose the eclat of temporary applause. They carry with them to the closet their own letters of recommendation. And as this volume confidently claims the character of good and valuable, it wants not the passport of praise. Every page speaks in its own favour, in the modest language of merit, which has no occasion to boast, though it cannot renounce its right to just esteem. The most valuable woods used in the fine cabinet work of the artisan, require neither paint nor varnish, but appear beautiful in their own veins and colours variegated by nature.

As it is likely that the student who reads this volume of Prose with pleasure, may also possess a taste for POETRY, it is right to mention in this place, that there is published by the same Proprietors, a volume of Poetry, similar in size and form; and as he may also wish to improve himself in the very useful art of Letter-Writing, that there is also provided a most copious volume of Letters from the best authors, under the title of ELEGANT EPISTLES.

This whole Set of Extracts, more copious, more convenient in its form, and valuable in its materials, than any which have preceded it, certainly conduces, in a very high degree, to that great national object, the PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, to promote which has been the primary object of the compiler.

MARCH 1, 1797.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THIS book derives its origin from a wish expressed by persons who have the conduct of schools, that such a compilation might be published, as by means of a full page, and a small, yet very legible type, might contain, in one volume, a little English library for young people who are in the course of their education. A common-sized volume, it was found, was soon perused, and laid aside for want of novelty; but to supply a large school with a great variety, and constant succession of English books, is too expensive and inconvenient to be generally practicable; such a quantity of matter is therefore collected in this volume as must of necessity fill up a good deal of time, and furnish a great number of new ideas before it can be read to satiety, or entirely exhausted. It may therefore very properly constitute, what it was intended to be, a Library for Learners, from the age of nine or ten to the age at which they leave their school: at the same time it is evident, upon inspection, that it abounds with such extracts as may be read by them at any age with pleasure and improvement. Though it is chiefly and primarily adapted to scholars at school; yet it is certain, that all readers may find it an agreeable companion, and particularly proper to fill up short intervals of accidental leisure.

As to the Authors from whom the extracts are made, they are those whose characters want no recommendation. The Spectators, Guardians, and Tatlers, have been often gleaned for the purpose of selections; but to have omitted them, in a work like this, for that reason, would have been like rejecting the purest coin of the fullest weight, because it is not quite fresh from the mint, but has been long in circulation. It ought to be remembered, that though the writings of Addison and his coadjutors may no longer have the grace of novelty in the eyes of veteran readers, yet they will always be new to a rising generation.

The greater part of this book, however, consists of extracts from more modern books, and from some which have not yet been used for the purpose of selections. It is to be presumed that living authors will not be displeased that useful and elegant passages have been borrowed of them for this book; since if they sincerely meant, as they profess, to reform and improve the age, they must be convinced, that to place their most salutary admonitions and sentences in the hands of young persons, is to contribute most effectually to the accomplishment of their benevolent design. The books themselves at large do not in general fall into the hands of school-boys; they are often too voluminous, too large, and too expensive for general adoption; they are soon torn and disfigured by the rough treatment which they usually meet with in a great school; and, indeed, whatever be the cause of it, they seldom are, or can be conveniently introduced; and therefore EXTRACTS are highly expedient, or rather absolutely necessary.



ADVERTISE.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE approbation with which the first edition of this book has been received by the Public, has operated as an encouragement to improve it. It has been judged proper to change the form and size from a *duodecimo* to an *octavo*; not only for the sake of giving it a more agreeable appearance, but also of adding to the quantity and variety of the contents. Some extracts have indeed been omitted, to make room for new matter; but the additions, upon the whole, are very considerable.

The utility of the collection is obvious. It is calculated for classical schools, and for those in which English only is taught. Young persons cannot read a book, containing so much matter, without acquiring a great improvement in the English Language; together with ideas on many pleasing subjects of Taste and Literature; and, which is of much higher importance, they will imbibe, with an increase of knowledge, the purest principles of Virtue and Religion.

The book may be employed in various methods for the use of learners, according to the judgment of various instructors. The pupils may not only read it in private, or in the school at stated times, but write out paragraphs in their copy books; commit passages to memory, and endeavour to recite them with the proper action and pronunciation, for the improvement of their powers of utterance. With respect to the Art of speaking, an excellence in it certainly depends more on practice, under the superintendence of a master, than on written precepts; and this book professes to offer *matter for practice*, rather than systematic instructions, which may be more advantageously given in a rhetorical treatise or *viva voce*. To learn the practical part of speaking, or the art of managing the voice and gesture, by written rules alone, is like learning to play upon a musical instrument, with the bare assistance of a book of directions without a master.

The books from which these Extracts are taken, are fit for the young readers libraries, and may be made the companions of their lives; while the present compilation offers itself only as an humble companion at school. In the character of a companion, it has a great deal to say to them; and will probably improve in the power of affording pleasure and instruction, the more its acquaintance is cultivated.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE THIRD AND FOURTH EDITIONS.

A DESIRE to render this Book singularly useful, and to deserve a continuance of that approbation with which it has been already received, has induced the Editor to enlarge and improve it in the present, as well as in every preceding edition.

To the first book a great variety of moral and religious extracts has been added, with a design to furnish a salutary employment for schools and families on a day which affords peculiar leisure. In the subsequent books have been inserted Oration, Characters, entertaining Essays on men and manners, pleasing passages on Natural History, a collection of old Proverbs, and other pieces, conducive to the prime purpose of uniting the useful with the agreeable.

The volume thus improved, together with the enlarged edition of ELEGANT EXTRACTS IN VERSE, will, it is hoped, be highly agreeable to young persons in their vacant hours, as well as useful to them in the classes of a school, and under the tuition of a preceptor.

As the book unavoidably became large by successive additions, it was judged proper to insert a Title Page and ornamental Design, nearly in the middle, that it may be optional to the purchaser to bind the Collection either in one, or in two volumes, as may best correspond with his own ideas of convenience.

INTRODUCTION.

ON PRONUNCIATION, OR DELIVERY.

FROM DR. BLAIR'S LECTURES.

I.
HOW much stress was laid upon Pronunciation, or Delivery, by the most eloquent of all orators, Demosthenes, appears from a noted saying of his, related both by Cicero and Quintilian; when being asked, What was the first point in oratory? he answered, Delivery; and being asked, What was the second? and afterwards, What was the third? he still answered, Delivery. There is no wonder, that he should have rated this so high, and that for improving himself in it, he should have employed those assiduous and painful labours, which all the Ancients take so much notice of; for, beyond doubt, nothing is of more importance. To superficial thinkers, the management of the voice and gesture, in public speaking, may appear to relate to decoration only, and to be one of the inferior arts of catching an audience. But this is far from being the case. It is intimately connected with what is, or ought to be, the end of all public speaking, Persuasion; and therefore deserves the study of the most grave and serious speakers, as much as of those, whose only aim it is to please.

For, let it be considered, whenever we address ourselves to others by words, our intention certainly is to make some impression on those to whom we speak; it is to convey to them our own ideas and emotions. Now the tone of our voice, our looks and gestures, interpret our ideas and emotions no less than words do; nay, the impression they make on others, is frequently much stronger than any that words can make. We often see that an expres-

sive look, or a passionate cry, unaccompanied by words, conveys to others more forcible ideas, and rouses within them stronger passions, than can be communicated by the most eloquent discourse. The signification of our sentiments, made by tones and gestures, has this advantage above that made by words, that it is the language of nature. It is that method of interpreting our mind, which nature has dictated to all, and which is understood by all; whereas words are only arbitrary, conventional symbols of our ideas; and, by consequence, must make a more feeble impression. So true is this, that, to render words fully significant, they must, almost in every case, receive some aid from the manner of Pronunciation and Delivery, and he who, in speaking, should employ bare words, without enforcing them by proper tones and accents, would leave us with a faint and indistinct impression, often with a doubtful and ambiguous conception of what he had delivered. Nay, so close is the connection between certain sentiments, and the proper manner of pronouncing them, that he who does not pronounce them after that manner, can never persuade us, that he believes, or feels, the sentiments themselves. His delivery may be such, as to give the lie to all that he asserts. When Marcus Callidius accused one of an attempt to poison him, but enforced his accusation in a languid manner, and without any warmth or earnestness of delivery, Cicero, who pleaded for the accused person, improved this into an argument of the falsity of the charge, "An tu, M. Callidi nisi fingeres, sic ageres?"

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In Shakespear's Richard II. the Dutchess of York thus impeaches the sincerity of her husband :

Pleads he in earnest?—Look upon his face,
His eyes do drop no tears; his prayers are jest;
His words come from his mouth; ours, from
our breast:
He prays but faintly, and would be denied;
We pray with heart and soul.

But, I believe it is needless to say any more, in order to shew the high importance of a good Delivery. I proceed, therefore, to such observations as appear to me most useful to be made on this head.

The great objects which every public speaker will naturally have in his eye in forming his Delivery, are, first, to speak so as to be fully and easily understood by all who hear him; and next, to speak with grace and force, so as to please and to move his audience. Let us consider what is most important with respect to each of these*.

In order to be fully and easily understood, the four chief requisites are, A due degree of loudness of voice; Distinctness; Slowness; and, Propriety of Pronunciation.

The first attention of every public speaker, doubtless, must be, to make himself be heard by all those to whom he speaks. He must endeavour to fill with his voice the space occupied by the assembly. This power of voice, it may be thought, is wholly a natural talent. It is so in a good measure; but, however, may receive considerable assistance from art. Much depends for this purpose on the proper pitch, and management of the voice. Every man has three pitches in his voice; the high, the middle, and the low one. The high, is that which he uses in calling aloud to some one at a distance. The low is, when he approaches to a whisper. The middle is, that which he employs in common conversation, and which he should generally use in public discourse. For it is a great mistake, to imagine that one must take the highest pitch of his voice, in order to be well heard by a great assembly. This is confounding two things which are different, loudness, or strength of sound, with the key, or note on which we speak. A

speaker may render his voice louder, without altering the key; and we shall always be able to give most body, most persevering force of sound, to that pitch of voice, to which in conversation we are accustomed. Whereas, by setting out on our highest pitch or key, we certainly allow ourselves less compass, and are likely to strain our voice before we have done. We shall fatigue ourselves, and speak with pain; and whenever a man speaks with pain to himself, he is always heard with pain by his audience. Give the voice therefore full strength and swell of sound; but always pitch it on your ordinary speaking key. Make it a constant rule never to utter a greater quantity of voice, than you can afford without pain to yourselves, and without any extraordinary effort. As long as you keep within these bounds, the other organs of speech will be at liberty to discharge their several offices with ease; and you will always have your voice under command. But whenever you transgress these bounds, you give up the reins, and have no longer any management of it. It is an useful rule too, in order to be well heard, to fix our eye on some of the most distant persons in the assembly, and to consider ourselves as speaking to them. We naturally and mechanically utter our words with such a degree of strength, as to make ourselves be heard by one to whom we address ourselves, provided he be within the reach of our voice. As this is the case in common conversation, it will hold also in public speaking. But remember, that in public as well as in conversation, it is possible to offend by speaking too loud. This extreme hurts the ear, by making the voice come upon it in rumbling indistinct masses; besides its giving the speaker the disagreeable appearance of one who endeavours to compel assent, by mere vehemence and force of sound.

In the next place, to being well heard, and clearly understood, distinctness of articulation contributes more, than mere loudness of sound. The quantity of sound necessary to fill even a large space, is smaller than is commonly imagined; and with distinct articulation, a man of a weak voice will make it reach farther, than the strongest voice can reach without it. To this, therefore, every public speaker ought to pay great attention. He must give every sound which he utters its due proportion, and make every syllable, and even every letter in the word which he pronounces,

* On this whole subject, Mr. Sheridan's Lectures on Elocution are very worthy of being consulted; and several hints are here taken from them.

be heard distinctly; without slurring, whispering, or suppressing any of the proper sounds.

In the third place, in order to articulate distinctly, moderation is requisite with regard to the speed of pronouncing. Precipitancy of speech confounds all articulation, and all meaning. I need scarcely observe, that there may be also an extreme on the opposite side. It is obvious, that a lifeless, drawling pronunciation, which allows the minds of the hearers to be always outrunning the speaker, must render every discourse insipid and fatiguing. But the extreme of speaking too fast is much more common, and requires the more to be guarded against, because, when it has grown up into a habit, few errors are more difficult to be corrected. To pronounce with a proper degree of slowness, and with full and clear articulation, is the first thing to be studied by all who begin to speak in public; and cannot be too much recommended to them. Such a pronunciation gives weight and dignity to their discourse. It is a great assistance to the voice, by the pauses and rests which it allows it more easily to make; and it enables the speaker to swell all his sounds, both with more force and more music. It assists him also in preserving a due command of himself; whereas a rapid and hurried manner, is apt to excite that flutter of spirits, which is the greatest enemy to all right execution in the way of oratory. "*Promptum sit os,*" says Quintilian, "*non præceps, moderatum, non lentum.*"

After these fundamental attentions to the pitch and management of the voice, to distinct articulation, and to a proper degree of slowness of speech, what a public speaker must, in the fourth place, study, is Propriety of Pronunciation; or the giving to every word, which he utters, that sound, which the most polite usage of the language appropriates to it; in opposition to broad, vulgar, or provincial pronunciation. This is requisite, both for speaking intelligibly, and for speaking with grace or beauty. Instructions concerning this article, can be given by the living voice only. But there is one observation, which it may not be improper here to make. In the English language, every word which consists of more syllables than one, has one accented syllable. The accent rests sometimes on the vowel, sometimes on the consonant. Sel-

dom, or never, is there more than one accented syllable in any English word, how-

ever long; and the genius of the language requires the voice to mark that syllable by a stronger percussion, and to pass more slightly over the rest. Now, after we have learned the proper seats of these accents, it is an important rule, to give every word just the same accent in public speaking, as in common discourse. Many persons err in this respect. When they speak in public, and with solemnity, they pronounce the syllables in a different manner from what they do at other times. They dwell upon them, and protract them; they multiply accents on the same word; from a mistaken notion, that it gives gravity and force to their discourse, and adds to the pomp of public declamation. Whereas, this is one of the greatest faults that can be committed in pronunciation; it makes what is called a theatrical or mouthing manner; and gives an artificial affected air to speech, which detracts greatly from its agreeableness, and its impression.

I proceed to treat next of those higher parts of Delivery, by studying which, a speaker has something farther in view than merely to render himself intelligible, and seeks to give grace and force to what he utters. These may be comprised under four heads, Emphasis, Pauses, Tones, and Gestures. Let me only premise in general, to what I am to say concerning them, that attention to these articles of Delivery, is by no means to be confined, as some might be apt to imagine, to the more elaborate and pathetic parts of a discourse; there is, perhaps, as great attention requisite, and as much skill displayed, in adapting emphases, pauses, tones, and gestures, properly, to calm and plain-speaking: and the effect of a just and graceful delivery will, in every part of a subject, be found of high importance for commanding attention, and enforcing what is spoken.

First, let us consider Emphasis; by this is meant a stronger and fuller sound of voice, by which we distinguish the accented syllable of some word, on which we design to lay particular stress, and to show how it affects the rest of the sentence. Sometimes the emphatic word must be distinguished by a particular tone of voice, as well as by a stronger accent. On the right management of the emphasis, depends the whole life and spirit of every discourse. If no emphasis be placed on any words, not only is discourse rendered heavy and lifeless, but the meaning left often ambiguous. If the emphasis be placed wrong,

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we pervert and confound the meaning wholly. To give a common instance; such a simple question as this: "Do you ride to town to-day?" is capable of no fewer than four different acceptations, according as the emphasis is differently placed on the words. If it be pronounced thus: Do *you* ride to town to-day? the answer may naturally be, No; I send *my servant* in my stead. If thus; Do you *ride* to town to-day? Answer, No; I intend to *walk*. Do you ride *to town* to-day? No; I ride out into *the fields*. Do you ride to town *to-day*? No; but I shall *to-morrow*. In like manner, in solemn discourse, the whole force and beauty of an expression often depend on the accented word; and we may present to the hearers quite different views of the same sentiment, by placing the emphasis differently. In the following words of our Saviour, observe in what different lights the thought is placed, according as the words are pronounced. "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" Betrayest thou—makes the reproach turn, on the infamy of treachery.—Betrayest *thou*—makes it rest, upon Judas's connection with his master. Betrayest thou the *Son of Man*—rests it, upon our Saviour's personal character and eminence. Betrayest thou the Son of man *with a kiss*? turns it upon his prostituting the signal of peace and friendship, to the purpose of a mark of destruction.

In order to acquire the proper management of the emphasis, the great rule, and indeed the only rule possible to be given, is, that the speaker study to attain a just conception of the force and spirit of those sentiments which he is to pronounce. For to lay the emphasis with exact propriety, is a constant exercise of good sense and attention. It is far from being an inconsiderable attainment. It is one of the greatest trials of a true and just taste; and must arise from feeling delicately ourselves, and from judging accurately of what is fittest to strike the feelings of others. There is as a great difference between a chapter of the Bible, or any other piece of plain prose, read by one who places the several emphases every where with taste and judgment, and by one who neglects or mistakes them, as there is between the same tune played by the most masterly hand, or by the most bungling performer.

In all prepared discourses, it would be of great use, if they were read over or

rehearsed in private, with this particular view, to search for the proper emphases before they were pronounced in public; marking at the same time, with a pen, the emphatical words in every sentence, or at least the most weighty and affecting parts of the discourse, and fixing them well in memory. Were this attention oftener bestowed, were this part of pronunciation studied with more exactness, and not left to the moment of delivery, as is commonly done, public speakers would find their care abundantly repaid, by the remarkable effects which it would produce upon their audience. Let me caution, at the same time, against one error, that of multiplying emphatical words too much. It is only by a prudent reserve in the use of them, that we can give them any weight. If they recur too often; if a speaker attempts to render every thing which he says of high importance, by a multitude of strong emphases, we soon learn to pay little regard to them. To crowd every sentence with emphatical words, is like crowding all the pages of a book with italic characters, which, as to the effect, is just the same with using no such distinctions at all.

Next to emphasis, the Pauses in speaking demand attention. These are of two kinds; first, emphatical pauses; and next, such as mark the distinctions of sense. An emphatical pause is made, after something has been said of peculiar moment, and on which we want to fix the hearer's attention. Sometimes, before such a thing is said, we usher it in with a pause of this nature. Such pauses have the same effect as a strong emphasis, and are subject to the same rules; especially to the caution just now given, of not repeating them too frequently. For, as they excite uncommon attention, and of course raise expectation, if the importance of the matter be not fully answerable to such expectation, they occasion disappointment and disgust.

But the most frequent and the principal use of pauses, is to mark the divisions of the sense, and at the same time to allow the speaker to draw his breath; and the proper and graceful adjustment of such pauses, is one of the most nice and difficult articles in delivery. In all public speaking, the management of the breath requires a good deal of care, so as not to be obliged to divide words from one another, which have so intimate a connection, that they ought to be pronounced with the

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same breath, and without the least separation. Many a sentence is miserably mangled, and the force of the emphasis totally lost, by divisions being made in the wrong place. To avoid this, every one, while he is speaking, should be very careful to provide a full supply of breath for what he is to utter. It is a great mistake to imagine, that the breath must be drawn only at the end of a period, when the voice is allowed to fall. It may easily be gathered at the intervals of the period, when the voice is only suspended for a moment; and, by this management, one may have always a sufficient stock for carrying on the longest sentence, without improper interruptions.

If any one, in public speaking, shall have formed to himself a certain melody or tune, which requires rest and pauses of its own, distinct from those of the sense, he has, undoubtedly, contracted one of the worst habits into which a public speaker can fall. It is the sense which should always rule the pauses of the voice; for wherever there is any sensible suspension of the voice, the hearer is always led to expect something corresponding in the meaning. Pauses in public discourse, must be formed upon the manner in which we utter ourselves in ordinary, sensible conversation; and not upon the stiff, artificial manner which we acquire from reading books according to the common punctuation. The general run of punctuation is very arbitrary; often capricious and false; and dictates an uniformity of tone in the pauses, which is extremely disagreeable: for we are to observe, that to render pauses graceful and expressive, they must not only be made in the right place, but also be accompanied with a proper tone of voice, by which the nature of these pauses is intimated; much more than by the length of them, which can never be exactly measured. Sometimes it is only a slight and simple suspension of voice that is proper; sometimes a degree of cadence in the voice is required; and sometimes that peculiar tone and cadence, which denotes the sentence finished. In all these cases, we are to regulate ourselves, by attending to the manner in which nature teaches us to speak when engaged in real and earnest discourse with others.

When we are reading or reciting verse, there is a peculiar difficulty in making the pauses justly. The difficulty arises from the melody of verse, which dictates to the

ear pauses or rests of its own; and to adjust and compound these properly with the pauses of the sense, so as neither to hurt the ear, nor offend the understanding, is so very nice a matter, that it is no wonder we so seldom meet with good readers of poetry. There are two kinds of pauses that belong to the music of verse; one is, the pause at the end of the line; and the other, the cæsural pause in the middle of it. With regard to the pause at the end of the line, which marks that strain or verse to be finished, rhyme renders this always sensible, and in some measure compels us to observe it in our pronunciation. In blank verse, where there is a greater liberty permitted of running the lines into one another, sometimes without any suspension in the sense, it has been made a question, Whether, in reading such verse with propriety, any regard at all should be paid to the close of a line? On the stage, where the appearance of speaking in verse should always be avoided, there can, I think, be no doubt, that the close of such lines as make no pause in the sense, should not be rendered perceptible to the ear. But on other occasions, this were improper: for what is the use of melody, or for what end has the poet composed in verse, if, in reading his lines, we suppress his numbers; and degrade them, by our pronunciation, into mere prose? We ought, therefore, certainly to read blank verse so as to make every line sensible to the ear. At the same time, in doing so, every appearance of sing-song and tone must be carefully guarded against. The close of the line, where it makes no pause in the meaning, ought to be marked, not by such a tone as is used in finishing a sentence, but without either letting the voice fall or elevating it, it should be marked only by such a slight suspension of sound, as may distinguish the passage from one line to another, without injuring the meaning.

The other kind of musical pause, is that which falls somewhere about the middle of the verse, and divides it into two hemistichs; a pause, not so great as that which belongs to the close of the line, but still sensible to an ordinary ear. This, which is called the cæsural pause, in the French heroic verse, falls uniformly in the middle of the line; in the English, it may fall after the 4th, 5th, 6th, or 7th syllables in the line, and no other. Where the verse is so constructed, that this cæsural pause coincides with the slightest pause or division in the

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the sense, the line can be read easily; as in the two first verses of Mr. Pope's *Messiah*,

Ye nymphs of Solyma! begin the song;
To heavenly themes, sublimer strains belong;

But if it shall happen that words, which have such a strict and intimate connection, as not to bear even a momentary separation, are divided from one another by this caesural pause, we then feel a sort of struggle between the sense and the sound, which renders it difficult to read such lines gracefully. The rule of proper pronunciation in such cases is, to regard only the pause which the sense forms; and to read the line accordingly. The neglect of the caesural pause may make the line sound somewhat unharmoniously; but the effect would be much worse, if the sense were sacrificed to the sound. For instance, in the following line of Milton,

What in me is dark,
Illumine; what is low, raise and support.

The sense clearly dictates the pause after "illumine," at the end of the third syllable, which, in reading, ought to be made accordingly; though, if the melody only were to be regarded, "illumine" should be connected with what follows, and the pause not made till the 4th or 6th syllable. So in the following line of Mr. Pope's (*Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*):

I sit, with sad civility I read;

The ear plainly points out the caesural pause as falling after "sad," the 4th syllable. But it would be very bad reading to make any pause there, so as to separate "sad" and "civility." The sense admits of no other pause than after the second syllable "sit," which therefore must be the only pause made in the reading.

I proceed to treat next of Tones in pronunciation, which are different both from emphasis and pauses; consisting in the modulation of the voice, the notes or variations of sound which we employ in public speaking. How much of the propriety, the force and grace of discourse, must depend on these, will appear from this single consideration; that to almost every sentiment we utter, more especially to every strong emotion, nature hath adapted some peculiar tone of voice; inasmuch, that he who should tell another that he was very angry, or much grieved, in a tone which did not suit such emotions, instead of being believed, would

be laughed at. Sympathy is one of the most powerful principles by which persuasive discourse works its effect. The speaker endeavours to transfuse into his hearers his own sentiments and emotions; which he can never be successful in doing, unless he utters them in such a manner as to convince the hearers that he feels them*. The proper expression of tones, therefore, deserves to be attentively studied by every one who would be a successful orator.

The greatest and most material instruction which can be given for this purpose is, to form the tones of public speaking upon the tones of sensible and animated conversation. We may observe that every man, when he is much in earnest in common discourse, when he is engaged in speaking on some subject which interests him nearly, has an eloquent or persuasive tone and manner. What is the reason of our being often so frigid and unpersuasive in public discourse, but our departing from the natural tone of speaking, and delivering ourselves in an affected, artificial manner? Nothing can be more absurd than to imagine, that as soon as one mounts a pulpit, or rises in a public assembly, he is instantly to lay aside the voice with which he expresses himself in private; to assume a new, studied tone, and a cadence altogether foreign to his natural manner. This has vitiated all delivery; this has given rise to cant and tedious monotony, in the different kinds of modern public speaking, especially in the pulpit. Men departed from nature; and sought to give a beauty or force, as they imagined, to their discourse, by substituting certain studied musical tones, in the room of the genuine expressions of sentiment, which the voice carries in natural discourse. Let every

* "All that passes in the mind of man may be reduced to two classes, which I call, Ideas, and Emotions. By Ideas, I mean all thoughts which rise and pass in succession in the mind: By Emotions, all exertions of the mind in arranging, combining, and separating its ideas; as well as all the effects produced on the mind itself by those ideas, from the more violent agitation of the passions, to the calmer feelings produced by the operation of the intellect and the fancy. In short, thought is the object of the one, internal feeling of the other. That which serves to express the former, I call the Language of Ideas; and the latter, the Language of Emotions. Words are the signs of the one, tones of the other. Without the use of these two sorts of language, it is impossible to communicate through the ear all that passes in the mind of man."

SHERIDAN on the Art of Reading.

public

public speaker guard against this error. Whether he speak in a private room, or in a great assembly, let him remember that he still speaks. Follow nature: consider how she teaches you to utter any sentiment or feeling of your heart. Imagine a subject of debate started in conversation among grave and wise men, and yourself bearing a share in it. Think after what manner, with what tones and inflexions of voice, you would on such an occasion express yourself, when you were most in earnest, and sought most to be listened to. Carry these with you to the bar, to the pulpit, or to any public assembly; let these be the foundation of your manner of pronouncing there; and you will take the surest method of rendering your delivery both agreeable and persuasive.

I have said, let these conversation tones be the *foundation* of public pronunciation; for, on some occasions, solemn public speaking requires them to be exalted beyond the strain of common discourse. In a formal, studied oration, the elevation of the style, and the harmony of the sentences, prompt, almost necessarily, a modulation of voice more rounded, and bordering more upon music, than conversation admits. This gives rise to what is called, the Declaiming Manner. But though this mode of pronunciation runs considerably beyond ordinary discourse, yet still it must have, for its basis, the natural tones of grave and dignified conversation. I must observe, at the same time, that the constant indulgence of a declamatory manner, is not favourable either to good composition, or good delivery; and is in hazard of betraying public speakers into that monotony of tone and cadence, which is so generally complained of. Whereas, he who forms the general run of his delivery upon a speaking manner, is not likely ever to become disagreeable through monotony. He will have the same natural variety in his tones, which a person has in conversation. Indeed, the perfection of delivery requires both these different manners, that of speaking with liveliness and ease, and that of declaiming with stateliness and dignity, to be possessed by one man; and to be employed by him, according as the different parts of his discourse require either the one or the other. This is a perfection which is not attained by many; the greatest part of public speakers allowing their delivery to be formed altogether accidentally, according as some turn of voice appears to them most beautiful, or some artificial model has caught their fancy; and

acquiring, by this means, a habit of pronunciation, which they can never vary. But the capital direction, which ought never to be forgotten, is, to copy the proper tones for expressing every sentiment, from those which nature dictates to us in conversation with others; to speak always with her voice; and not to form to ourselves a fantastic public manner, from an absurd fancy of its being more beautiful than a natural one*.

It now remains to treat of Gesture, or what is called Action in public discourse. Some nations animate their words in common conversation, with many more motions of the body than others do. The French and the Italians are, in this respect, much more sprightly than we. But there is no nation, hardly any person so phlegmatic, as not to accompany their words with some actions and gesticulations, on all occasions, when they are much in earnest. It is therefore unnatural in a public speaker, it is inconsistent with that earnestness and seriousness which he ought to shew in all affairs of moment, to remain quite unmoved in his outward appearance; and to let the words drop from his mouth, without any expression of meaning, or warmth in his gesture.

The fundamental rule as to propriety of action, is undoubtedly the same with what I gave as to propriety of tone. Attend to the looks and gestures, in which earnestness, indignation, compassion, or any other emotion, discovers itself to most advantage in the common intercourse of men; and let these be your model. Some of these looks and gestures are common to all men; and there are also certain peculiarities of manner which distinguish every individual. A public speaker must take that manner which is most natural to himself. For it is here just as in tones. It is not the business of a speaker to form to himself a certain set of motions and gestures, which he thinks most becoming and agreeable, and to practise

* "Loquere," (says an author of the last century, who has written a *Traité en Vers, de Geste et Voce Oratoris*)

—"Loquere; hoc vitium commune, loquatur
"Ut nemo; at tanta declamaret omnis voce.

"Tu loquere, ut mos est hominum; Boas & latrat
ille;

"Ille ululat; rudis hic (sati si talia dignum est);
"Non hominem vox ulla sonat ratione loquentem."

JOANNES LUCAS, de Geste et Voce,
Lib. II. Paris 1675.

these

these in public, without their having any correspondence to the manner which is natural to him in private. His gestures and motions ought all to carry that kind of expression which nature has dictated to him; and, unless this be the case, it is impossible, by means of any study, to avoid their appearing stiff and forced.

However, although nature must be the ground-work, I admit that there is room in this matter for some study and art. For many persons are naturally ungraceful in the motions which they make; and this ungracefulness might, in part, at least, be reformed by application and care. The study of action in public speaking, consists chiefly in guarding against awkward and disagreeable motions, and in learning to perform such as are natural to the speaker, in the most becoming manner. For this end, it has been advised by writers on this subject, to practise before a mirror, where one may see and judge of his own gestures. But I am afraid, persons are not always the best judges of the gracefulness of their own motions: and one may declaim long enough before a mirror, without correcting any of his faults. The judgment of a friend, whose good taste they can trust, will be found of much greater advantage to beginners, than any mirror they can use. With regard to particular rules concerning action and gesticulation, Quintilian has delivered a great many, in the last chapter of the 11th Book of his Institutions; and all the modern writers on this subject have done little else but translate them. I am not of opinion, that such rules delivered either by the voice or on paper, can be of much use, unless persons saw them exemplified before their eyes*.

* The few following hints only I shall adventure to throw out, hoping they may be of service. When speaking in public, one should study to preserve as much dignity as possible in the whole attitude of the body. An erect posture is generally to be chosen: standing firm, so as to have the fullest and freest command of all his motions; any inclination which is used, should be forwards towards the hearers, which is a natural expression of earnestness. As for the countenance, the chief rule is, that it should correspond with the nature of the discourse, and when no particular emotion is expressed, a serious and manly look is always the best. The eyes should never be fixed close on any one object, but move easily round the audience. In the motions made with the hands, consists the chief part of gesture in speaking. The Ancients condemned all motions performed by the left hand alone; but I am not sensible that these are always offensive, though it is natural for the right hand to

I shall only add further on this head, that in order to succeed well in delivery, nothing is more necessary than for a speaker to guard against a certain flutter of spirits, which is peculiarly incident to those who begin to speak in public. He must endeavour above all things to be recollected, and master of himself. For this end, he will find nothing of more use to him, than to study to become wholly engaged in his subject; to be possessed with a sense of its importance or seriousness; to be concerned much more to persuade than to please. He will generally please most, when pleasing is not his sole nor chief aim. This is the only rational and proper method of raising one's self above that timid and bashful regard to an audience, which is so ready to disconcert a speaker, both as to what he is to say, and as to his manner of saying it.

I cannot conclude, without an earnest admonition to guard against all affectation, which is the certain ruin of good delivery. Let your manner, whatever it is, be your own; neither imitated from another, nor assumed upon some imaginary model, which is unnatural to you. Whatever is native, even though accompanied with several defects, yet is likely to please; because it shows us a man; because it has the appearance of coming from the heart. Whereas a delivery, attended with several acquired graces and beauties, if it be not easy and free, if it betray the marks of art and affectation, never fails to disgust. To attain any extremely correct, and perfectly graceful delivery, is what few can expect; so many natural talents being requisite to concur in forming it. But to attain, what as to the effect is very little inferior, a forcible and persuasive manner, is within the

be more frequently employed. Warm emotions demand the motion of both hands corresponding together. But whether one gesticulates with one or with both hands, it is an important rule, that all his motions should be free and easy. Narrow and straitened movements are generally ungraceful; for which reason, motions made with the hands are directed to proceed from the shoulder, rather than from the elbow. Perpendicular movements too with the hands, that is, in the straight line up and down, which Shakespear, in Hamlet, calls, "sawing the air with the hand," are seldom good. Oblique motions are, in general, the most graceful. Too sudden and nimble motions should be likewise avoided. Earnestness can be fully expressed without them. Shakespear's directions on this head are full of good sense; "use all gently," says he, "and in the very torrent and tempest of "passion, acquire a temperance that may give it "smoothness."

power

power of most persons; if they will only unlearn false and corrupt habits; if they will allow themselves to follow nature, and will speak in public, as they do in private, when they speak in earnest, and from the heart. If one has naturally any gross defects in his voice or gestures, he begins at the wrong end, if he attempts at reforming them only when he is to speak in public: he should begin with rectifying them in his private manner of speaking; and then carry to the public the right habit he has formed. For when a speaker is engaged in a public discourse, he should not be then employing his attention about his manner, or thinking of his tones and his gestures. If he be so employed, study and affectation will appear. He ought to be then quite in earnest; wholly occupied with his subject and his sentiments; leaving nature, and previously formed habits, to prompt and suggest his manner of delivery.

II.

Means of improving in Eloquence.

I have now treated fully of the different kinds of public speaking, of the composition, and of the delivery of a discourse. Before I finish this subject, it may be of use to suggest some things concerning the properest means of improvement in the art of public speaking, and the most necessary studies for that purpose.

To be an eloquent speaker, in the proper sense of the word, is far from being either a common or an easy attainment. Indeed, to compose a florid harangue on some popular topic, and to deliver it so as to amuse an audience, is a matter not very difficult. But though some praise be due to this, yet the idea, which I have endeavoured to give of eloquence, is much higher. It is a great exertion of the human powers. It is the art of being persuasive and commanding; the art, not of pleasing the fancy merely, but of speaking both to the understanding and to the heart: of interesting the hearers in such a degree, as to seize and carry them along with us; and to leave them with a deep and strong impression of what they have heard. How many talents, natural and acquired, must concur for carrying this to perfection! A strong, lively, and warm imagination; quick sensibility of heart, joined with solid judgment, good sense, and presence of mind; all improved by great and long attention to style and composition;

and supported also by the exterior, yet important qualifications, of a graceful manner, a presence not ungainly, and a full and tuneable voice. How little reason to wonder, that a perfect and accomplished orator should be one of the characters that is most rarely to be found!

Let us not despair, however. Between mediocrity and perfection there is a very wide interval. There are many intermediate spaces, which may be filled up with honour; and the more rare and difficult that complete perfection is, the greater is the honour of approaching to it, though we do not fully attain it. The number of orators who stand in the highest class is, perhaps, smaller than the number of poets who are foremost in poetic fame; but the study of oratory has this advantage above that of poetry, that, in poetry, one must be an eminently good performer, or he is not supportable;

Mediocribus esse poetis
Non homines, non Di, non concessere co-
lunne*.

In Eloquence this does not hold. There one may possess a moderate station with dignity. Eloquence admits of a great many different forms; plain and simple, as well as high and pathetic; and a genius that cannot reach the latter, may shine with much reputation and usefulness in the former.

Whether nature or art contribute most to form an orator, is a trifling enquiry. In all attainments whatever, nature must be the prime agent. She must bestow the original talents. She must sow the seeds; but culture is requisite for bringing those seeds to perfection. Nature must always have done somewhat; but a great deal will always be left to be done by art. This is certain, that study and discipline are more necessary for the improvement of natural genius in oratory, than they are in poetry. What I mean is, that though poetry be capable of receiving assistance from critical art, yet a poet, without any aid from art, by the force of genius alone, can rise higher than a public speaker can do, who has never given attention to the rules of style, composition, and delivery. Homer formed himself; Demosthenes and Cicero were formed by the help of much labour, and of many assistances derived from the labour of others.

* For God and man, and lettered post denies,
That poets ever are of middling size.

FRANCIS.

After

After these preliminary observations, let us proceed to the main design of this lecture; to treat of the means to be used for improvement in eloquence.

In the first place, what stands highest in the order of means, is personal character and disposition. In order to be a truly eloquent or persuasive speaker, nothing is more necessary than to be a virtuous man. This was a favourite position among the ancient rhetoricians: "Non posse oratorem esse nisi virum bonum." To find any such connection between virtue and one of the highest liberal arts, must give pleasure; and it can, I think, be clearly shewn, that this is not a mere topic of declamation, but that the connection here alledged, is undoubtedly founded in truth and reason.

For, consider, first, Whether any thing contributes more to persuasion, than the opinion which we entertain of the probity, disinterestedness, candour, and other good moral qualities of the person who endeavours to persuade? These give weight and force to every thing which he utters; nay, they add a beauty to it; they dispose us to listen with attention and pleasure; and create a secret partiality in favour of that side which he espouses. Whereas, if we entertain a suspicion of craft and dissimulation, of a corrupt, or a base mind, in the speaker, his eloquence loses all its real effect. It may entertain and amuse; but it is viewed as artifice, as trick, as the play only of speech; and, viewed in this light, whom can it persuade? We even read a book with more pleasure, when we think favourably of its author; but when we have the living speaker before our eyes, addressing us personally on some subject of importance, the opinion we entertain of his character must have a much more powerful effect.

But, lest it should be said, that this relates only to the character of virtue, which one may maintain, without being at bottom a truly worthy man, I must observe farther, that, besides the weight which it adds to character, real virtue operates also in other ways, to the advantage of eloquence.

First, Nothing is so favourable as virtue to the prosecution of honourable studies. It prompts a generous emulation to excel; it inures to industry; it leaves the mind vacant and free, master of itself, disencumbered of those bad passions, and disengaged from those mean pursuits, which have ever been found the greatest enemies to true proficiency. Quintilian has touched this consideration very properly: "Quod si

" agrorum nimia cura, et sollicitior rei fa,
" miliaris diligentia, et venandi voluptas
" et dati spectaculis dies, multum studiis
" auferunt, quid putamus sacras cupidi-
" tatem, avaritiam, invidiam? Nihil enim
" est tam occupatum, tam multiforme, tot
" ac tam variis affectibus concisum, atque
" laceratum, quam mala ac improba mens.
" Quis inter hæc, literis, aut ulli bonæ
" arti, locus? Non hæc magis quam
" frugibus, in terra sentibus ac rubis oc-
" cupata."

But, besides this consideration, there is another of still higher importance, though I am not sure of its being attended to as much as it deserves; namely, that from the fountain of real and genuine virtue, are drawn those sentiments which will ever be most powerful in affecting the hearts of others. Bad as the world is, nothing has so great and universal a command over the minds of men as virtue. No kind of language is so generally understood, and so powerfully felt, as the native language of worthy and virtuous feelings. He only, therefore, who possesses these full and strong, can speak properly, and in its own language, to the heart. On all great subjects and occasions, there is a dignity, there is an energy in noble sentiments, which is overcoming and irresistible. They give an ardour and a flame to one's discourse, which seldom fails to kindle a like flame in those who hear; and which, more than any other cause, bestows on eloquence that power, for which it is famed, of seizing and transporting an audience. Here art and imitation will not avail. An assumed character conveys nothing of this powerful warmth. It is only a native and unaffected glow of feeling, which can transmit the emotion to others. Hence the most renowned orators, such as Cicero and Demosthenes, were no less distinguished for some of the high virtues, as public spirit and zeal for their country, than for eloquence.

* " If the management of an estate, if anxious
" attention to domestic economy, a passion for
" hunting, or whole days given up to public
" places and amusements, consume so much time
" that is due to study, how much greater waste
" must be occasioned by licentious desires, avarice,
" or envy! Nothing is so much hurried and agi-
" tated, so contradictory to itself, or so violently
" torn and shattered by conflicting passions, as a
" bad heart. Amidst the distractions which it
" produces, what room is left for the cultivation
" of letters, or the pursuit of any honourable art?
" No more, assuredly, than there is for the growth
" of corn in a field that is over-run with thorns
" and brambles."

Beyond

Beyond doubt, to these virtues their eloquence owed much of its effect; and those orations of theirs, in which there breathes most of the virtuous and magnanimous spirit, are those which have most attracted the admiration of ages.

Nothing, therefore, is more necessary for those who would excel in any of the higher kinds of oratory, than to cultivate habits of the several virtues, and to refine and improve all their moral feelings. Whenever these become dead, or callous, they may be assured, that on every great occasion, they will speak with less power, and less success. The sentiments and dispositions particularly requisite for them to cultivate, are the following; the love of justice and order, and indignation at insolence and oppression; the love of honesty and truth, and detestation of fraud, meanness, and corruption; magnanimity of spirit; the love of liberty, of their country and the public; zeal for all great and noble designs, and reverence for all worthy and heroic characters. A cold and sceptical turn of mind is extremely adverse to eloquence; and no less so, is that cavilling disposition which takes pleasure in depreciating what is great, and ridiculing what is generally admired.

Such a disposition bespeaks one not very likely to excel in any thing; but least of all in oratory. A true orator should be a person of generous sentiments, of warm feelings, and of a mind turned towards the admiration of all those great and high objects which mankind are naturally formed to admire. Joined with the manly virtues, he should, at the same time, possess strong and tender sensibility to all the injuries, distresses, and sorrows, of his fellow-creatures; a heart that can easily relent; that can readily enter into the circumstances of others, and can make their case his own. A proper mixture of courage, and of modesty, must also be studied by every public speaker. Modesty is essential; it is always, and justly, supposed to be a concomitant of merit: and every appearance of it is winning and prepossessing. But modesty ought not to run into excessive timidity. Every public speaker should be able to rest somewhat on himself; and to assume that air, not of self-complacency, but of firmness, which bespeaks a consciousness of his being thoroughly persuaded of the truth or justice, of what he delivers; a circumstance of no small consequence for making impression on those who hear.



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ELEGANT

ELEGANT EXTRACTS

IN PROSE.

BOOK THE FIRST.

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS.

1. *The Vision of Mirza, exhibiting a Picture of Human Life.*

ON the fifth day of the moon, which, according to the custom of my forefathers, I always keep holy, after having washed myself, and offered up my morning devotions, I ascended the high hills of Bagdat, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer. As I was here airing myself on the tops of the mountains, I fell into a profound contemplation on the vanity of human life; and passing from one thought to another, Surely, said I, man is but a shadow, and life a dream. Whilst I was thus musing, I cast my eyes towards the summit of a rock that was not far from me, where I discovered one in the habit of a shepherd, with a little musical instrument in his hand. As I looked upon him, he applied it to his lips, and began to play upon it. The sound of it was exceeding sweet, and wrought into a variety of tunes that were inexpressibly melodious, and altogether different from any thing I had ever heard: they put me in mind of those heavenly airs that are played to the departed souls of good men upon their first arrival in Paradise, to wear out the impressions of the last agonies, and qualify them for the pleasures of that happy place. My heart melted away in secret raptures.

I had been often told, that the rock before me was the haunt of a genius; and that several had been entertained with that music, who had passed by it, but never heard that the musician had before made himself visible. When he had raised my thoughts, by those transporting airs which

he played, to taste the pleasures of his conversation, as I looked upon him like one astonished, he beckoned to me, and, by the waving of his hand, directed me to approach the place where he sat. I drew near with that reverence which is due to a superior nature; and as my heart was entirely subdued by the captivating strains I had heard, I fell down at his feet, and wept. The genius smiled upon me with a look of compassion and affability that familiarized him to my imagination, and at once dispelled all the fears and apprehensions with which I approached him. He lifted me from the ground, and taking me by the hand, Mirza, said he, I have heard thee in thy soliloquies; follow me.

He then led me to the highest pinnacle of the rock, and placing me on the top of it, Cast thy eyes eastward, said he, and tell me what thou seest. I see, said I, a huge valley, and a prodigious tide of water rolling through it. The valley that thou seest, said he, is the vale of misery; and the tide of water that thou seest, is part of the great tide of eternity. What is the reason, said I, that the tide I see rises out of a thick mist at one end, and again loses itself in a thick mist at the other? What thou seest, said he, is that portion of eternity which is called Time, measured out by the sun, and reaching from the beginning of the world to its consummation. Examine now, said he, this sea, that is bounded with darkness at both ends, and tell me what thou discoverest in it. I see a bridge, said I, standing in the midst of the tide. The bridge thou seest, said he, is human life; consider it attentively. Upon a more leisurely sur-

vey of it, I found that it consisted of three-score and ten entire arches, with several broken arches, which, added to those that were entire, made up the number about an hundred. As I was counting the arches, the genius told me that this bridge consisted at first of a thousand arches; but that a great flood swept away the rest, and left the bridge in the ruinous condition I now beheld it: but tell me further, said he, what thou discoverest on it. I see multitudes of people passing over it, said I, and a black cloud hanging on each end of it. As I looked more attentively, I saw several of the passengers dropping through the bridge into the great tide that flowed underneath it; and upon further examination, perceived there were innumerable trap-doors that lay concealed in the bridge, which the passengers no sooner trod upon, but they fell through them into the tide, and immediately disappeared. These hidden pit-falls were set very thick at the entrance of the bridge, so that throngs of people no sooner broke through the cloud, but many of them fell into them. They grew thinner towards the middle, but multiplied and lay closer together towards the end of the arches that were entire.

There were indeed some persons, but their number was very small, that continued a kind of hobbling march on the broken arches, but fell through one after another, being quite tired and spent with so long a walk.

I passed some time in the contemplation of this wonderful structure, and the great variety of objects which it presented. My heart was filled with a deep melancholy, to see several dropping unexpectedly in the midst of mirth and jollity, and catching at every thing that stood by them, to save themselves. Some were looking up towards the heavens in a thoughtful posture, and, in the midst of a speculation, stumbled and fell out of sight. Multitudes were very busy in the pursuit of bubbles, that glittered in their eyes, and danced before them; but often, when they thought themselves within the reach of them, their footing failed, and down they sunk. In this confusion of objects, I observed some with scimitars in their hands, and others with urinals, who ran to and fro upon the bridge, thrusting several persons on trap-doors which did not seem to lie in their way, and which they might have escaped had they not been thus forced upon them.

The genius seeing me indulge myself in this melancholy prospect, told me I had dwelt long enough upon it: Take thine eyes off the bridge, said he, and tell me if thou seest any thing thou dost not comprehend. Upon looking up, What mean, said I; those great flights of birds that are perpetually hovering about the bridge, and settling upon it from time to time? I see vultures, harpies, ravens, cormorants, and, among many other feathered creatures, several little winged boys, that perch in great numbers upon the middle arches. These, said the genius, are envy, avarice, superstition, despair, love, with the like cares and passions that infect human life.

I here fetched a deep sigh: Alas, said I, man was made in vain! how is he given away to misery and mortality! tortured in life, and swallowed up in death! The genius being moved with compassion towards me, bid me quit so uncomfortable a prospect. Look no more, said he, on man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting out for eternity; but cast thine eye on that thick mist into which the tide bears the several generations of mortals that fall into it. I directed my sight as I was ordered, and (whether or no the good genius strengthened it with any supernatural force, or dissipated part of the mist that was before too thick for the eye to penetrate) I saw the valley opening at the farther end, and spreading forth into an immense ocean, that had a huge rock of adamant running through the midst of it, and dividing it into two equal parts. The clouds still rested on one half of it, insomuch that I could discover nothing in it: but the other appeared to me a vast ocean, planted with innumerable islands, that were covered with fruits and flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little shining seas that ran among them. I could see persons dressed in glorious habits, with garlands upon their heads, passing among the trees, lying down by the sides of fountains, or reeling on beds of flowers; and could hear a confused harmony of singing birds, falling waters, human voices, and musical instruments. Gladness grew in me at the discovery of so delightful a scene. I wished for the wings of an eagle, that I might fly away to those happy seats; but the genius told me there was no passage to them, except through the gates of death that I saw opening every moment upon the bridge. The islands, said he, that lie

so



so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole face of the ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the sands on the sea-shore; there are myriads of islands behind those which thou here discoverest, reaching further than thine eye, or even thine imagination, can extend itself. These are the mansions of good men after death, who, according to the degree and kinds of virtue in which they excelled, are distributed among these several islands, which abound with pleasures of different kinds and degrees, suitable to the relishes and perfections of those who are settled in them; every island is a paradise accommodated to its respective inhabitants. Are not these, O Mirza, habitations worth contending for? Does life appear miserable, that gives thee opportunities of earning such a reward? Is death to be feared, that will convey thee to so happy an existence? Think not man was made in vain, who has such an eternity reserved for him.—I gazed with inexpressible pleasure on these happy islands. At length, said I, Shew me now, I beseech thee, the secrets that lie hid under those dark clouds, which cover the ocean on the other side of the rock of adamant. The genius making me no answer, I turned about to address myself to him a second time, but I found that he had left me: I then turned again to the vision which I had been so long contemplating; but instead of the rolling tide, the arched bridge, and the happy islands, I saw nothing but the long hollow valley of Bagdat, with oxen, sheep, and camels, grazing upon the sides of it.

Spectator.

§ 2. *The Voyage of Life; an Allegory.*

'Life,' says Seneca, 'is a voyage, in the progress of which we are perpetually changing our scenes: we first leave childhood behind us, then youth, then the years of ripened manhood, then the better or more pleasing part of old age.'—The perusal of this passage having excited in me a train of reflections on the state of man, the incessant fluctuation of his wishes, the gradual change of his disposition to all external objects, and the thoughtlessness with which he floats along the stream of time, I sunk into a slumber amidst my meditations, and, on a sudden, found my ears filled with the tumult of labour, the shouts of alacrity, the shrieks of alarm, the whistle of winds, and the dash of waters.

My astonishment for a time repressed

my curiosity; but soon recovering myself so far as to enquire whither we were going, and what was the cause of such clamour and confusion; I was told that they were launching out into the ocean of Life; that we had already passed the straits of Infancy, in which multitudes had perished, some by the weakness and fragility of their vessels, and more by the folly, perverseness, or negligence of those who undertook to steer them; and that we were now on the main sea, abandoned to the winds and billows, without any other means of security than the care of the pilot, whom it was always in our power to chuse, among great numbers that offered their direction and assistance.

I then looked round with anxious eagerness; and, first turning my eyes behind me, saw a stream flowing through flowery islands, which every one that failed along seemed to behold with pleasure; but no sooner touched, than the current, which, though not noisy or turbulent, was yet irresistible, bore him away. Beyond these islands, all was darkness; nor could any of the passengers describe the shore at which he first embarked.

Before me, and on either side was an expanse of waters violently agitated, and covered with so thick a mist, that the most perspicacious eyes could see but a little way. It appeared to be full of rocks and whirlpools, for many sunk unexpectedly while they were courting the gale with full sails, and insulting those whom they had left behind. So numerous, indeed, were the dangers, and so thick the darkness, that no caution could confer security. Yet there were many, who, by false intelligence, betrayed their followers into whirlpools, or by violence pushed those whom they found in their way against the rocks.

The current was invincible and insurmountable; but though it was impossible to sail against it, or to return to the place that was once passed, yet it was not so violent as to allow no opportunities for dexterity or courage, since, though none could retreat back from danger, yet they might often avoid it by oblique direction.

It was, however, not very common to steer with much care or prudence; for, by some universal infatuation, every man appeared to think himself safe, though he saw his consorts every moment sinking round him; and no sooner had the waves closed over them, than their fate and their misconduct were forgotten; the voyage was pursued

perused with the same jocund confidence; every man congratulated himself upon the soundness of his vessel, and believed himself able to stem the whirlpool in which his friend was swallowed, or glide over the rocks on which he was dashed: nor was it often observed that the sight of a wreck made any man change his course; if he turned aside for a moment, he soon forgot the rudder, and left himself again to the disposal of chance.

This negligence did not proceed from indifference, or from weariness of their present condition; for not one of those who thus rushed upon destruction failed, when he was sinking, to call loudly upon his associates for that help which could not now be given him: and many spent their last moments in cautioning others against the folly by which they were intercepted in the midst of their course. Their benevolence was sometimes praised, but their admonitions were unregarded.

The vessels in which we had embarked, being confessedly unequal to the turbulence of the stream of life, were visibly impaired in the course of the voyage, so that every passenger was certain, that how long soever he might, by favourable accidents, or by incessant vigilance, be preserved, he must sink at last.

This necessity of perishing might have been expected to sadden the gay, and intimidate the daring, at least to keep the melancholy and timorous in perpetual torments, and hinder them from any enjoyment of the varieties and gratifications which nature offered them as the solace of their labours; yet in effect none seemed less to expect destruction than those to whom it was most dreadful; they all had the art of concealing their danger from themselves; and those who knew their inability to bear the sight of the terrors that embarrassed their way, took care never to look forward, but found some amusement of the present moment, and generally entertained themselves by playing with Hope, who was the constant associate of the voyage of Life.

Yet all that Hope ventured to promise, even to those whom she favoured most, was, not that they should escape, but that they should sink last; and with this promise every one was satisfied, though he laughed at the rest for seeming to believe it. Hope, indeed, apparently mocked the credulity of her companions; for, in proportion as their vessels grew leaky, she

redoubled her assurances of safety; and none were more busy in making provisions for a long voyage, than they whom all but themselves saw likely to perish soon by irreparable decay.

In the midst of the current of Life, was the gulph of Intemperance, a dreadful whirlpool, interspersed with rocks, of which the pointed crags were concealed under water, and the tops covered with herbage, on which Ease spread couches of repose; and with shades, where Pleasure warbled the song of invitation. Within sight of these rocks, all who sailed on the ocean of Life must necessarily pass. Reason indeed was always at hand to steer the passengers through a narrow outlet, by which they might escape; but very few could, by her entreaties or remonstrances, be induced to put the rudder into her hand, without stipulating that she should approach so near unto the rocks of Pleasure, that they might solace themselves with a short enjoyment of that delicious region, after which they always determined to pursue their course without any other deviation.

Reason was too often prevailed upon so far by these promises, as to venture her charge within the eddy of the gulph of Intemperance, where, indeed, the circumvolution was weak, but yet interrupted the course of the vessel, and drew it, by insensible rotations, towards the centre. She then repented her temerity, and with all her force endeavoured to retreat; but the draught of the gulph was generally too strong to be overcome; and the passenger, having danced in circles with a pleasing and giddy velocity, was at last overwhelmed and lost. Those few whom Reason was able to extricate, generally suffered so many shocks upon the points which shot out from the rocks of Pleasure, that they were unable to continue their course with the same strength and facility as before, but floated along timorously and feebly, endangered by every breeze, and shattered by every ruffle of the water, till they sunk, by slow degrees, after long struggles, and innumerable expedients, always repining at their own folly, and warning others against the first approach of the gulph of Intemperance.

There were artists who professed to repair the breaches and stop the leaks of the vessels which had been shattered on the rocks of Pleasure. Many appeared to have great confidence in their skill, and some, indeed, were preserved by it from

sinking,

sinking, who had received only a single blow; but I remarked, that few vessels lasted long which had been much repaired, nor was it found that the artists themselves continued afloat longer than those who had least of their assistance.

The only advantage which, in the voyage of Life, the cautions had above the negligent, was, that they sunk later, and more suddenly; for they passed forward till they had sometimes seen all those in whose company they had issued from the straits of Infancy, perish in the way, and at last were overtaken by a cross breeze, without the toil of resistance, or the anguish of expectation. But such as had often fallen against the rocks of Pleasure, commonly subsided by sensible degrees, contended long with the encroaching waters, and harassed themselves by labours that scarce Hope herself could flatter with success.

As I was looking upon the various fate of the multitude about me, I was suddenly alarmed with an admonition from some unknown power, 'Gaze not idly upon others when thou thyself art sinking. Whence is this thoughtless tranquillity, when thou and they are equally endangered?' I looked, and seeing the gulph of Intemperance before me, started and awaked.

Rambler.

§ 3. *The Journey of a Day, a Picture of Human Life; the Story of Obidah.*

Obidah, the son of Abensina, left the caravan early in the morning, and pursued his journey through the plains of Indostan. He was fresh and vigorous with rest; he was animated with hope; he was incited by desire; he walked swiftly forward over the vallies, and saw the hills gradually rising before him. As he passed along, his ears were delighted with the morning song of the bird of paradise, he was fanned by the last flutters of the sinking breeze, and sprinkled with dew by groves of spices; he sometimes contemplated the towering height of the oak, monarch of the hills; and sometimes caught the gentle fragrance of the primrose, eldest daughter of the spring: all his senses were gratified, and all care was banished from the heart.

Thus he went on till the sun approached his meridian, and the increasing heat preyed upon his strength; he then looked round about him for some more commodious path. He saw, on his right hand, a grove that seemed to wave its shades as

a sign of invitation; he entered it, and found the coolness and verdure irresistibly pleasant. He did not, however, forget whither he was travelling, but found a narrow way bordered with flowers, which appeared to have the same direction with the main road, and was pleased that, by this happy experiment, he had found means to unite pleasure with business, and to gain the rewards of diligence, without suffering its fatigues. He, therefore, still continued to walk for a time, without the least remission of his ardour, except that he was sometimes tempted to stop by the music of the birds, whom the heat had assembled in the shade, and sometimes amused himself with plucking the flowers that covered the banks on either side, or the fruits that hung upon the branches. At last the green path began to decline from its first tendency, and to wind among hills and thickets, cooled with fountains, and murmuring with water-falls. Here Obidah paused for a time, and began to consider whether it were longer safe to forsake the known and common track; but remembering that the heat was now in its greatest violence, and that the plain was dusty and uneven, he resolved to pursue the new path, which he supposed only to make a few meanders, in compliance with the varieties of the ground, and to end at last in the common road.

Having thus calmed his solicitude, he renewed his pace, though he suspected that he was not gaining ground. This uneasiness of his mind inclined him to lay hold on every new object, and give way to every sensation that might sooth or divert him. He listened to every echo; he mounted every hill for a fresh prospect; he turned aside to every cascade, and pleased himself with tracing the course of a gentle river that rolled among the trees, and watered a large region with innumerable circumvolutions. In these amusements the hours passed away uncounted, his deviations had perplexed his memory, and he knew not towards what point to travel. He stood pensive and confused, afraid to go forward lest he should go wrong, yet conscious that the time of loitering was now past. While he was thus tortured with uncertainty, the sky was overspread with clouds, the day vanished from before him, and a sudden tempest gathered round his head. He was now roused by his danger, to a quick and painful remembrance of his folly; he now saw how happiness is lost, when ease is consulted; he lamented the

unmanly impatience that prompted him to seek shelter in the grove, and despised the petty curiosity that led him on from trifle to trifle. While he was thus reflecting, the air grew blacker, and a clap of thunder broke his meditation.

He now resolved to do what remained yet in his power; to tread back the ground which he had passed, and try to find some issue where the wood might open into the plain. He prostrated himself on the ground, and commended his life to the Lord of nature. He rose with confidence and tranquillity, and pressed on with his sabre in his hand, for the beasts of the desert were in motion; and on every hand were heard the mingled howls of rage and fear, and ravage and expiration; all the horrors of darkness and solitude surrounded him; the winds roared in the woods, and the torrents tumbled from the hills.

Work'd into sudden rage by wintry show'rs,
Down the steep hill the roaring torrent pours;
The mountain shepherd hears the distant noise.

Thus forlorn and distressed, he wandered through the wild, without knowing whither he was going, or whether he was every moment drawing nearer to safety or to destruction. At length, not fear, but labour, began to overcome him; his breath grew short, and his knees trembled, and he was on the point of lying down in resignation to his fate, when he beheld through the brambles the glimmer of a taper. He advanced towards the light, and finding that it proceeded from the cottage of a hermit, he called humbly at the door, and obtained admission. The old man set before him such provisions as he had collected for himself, on which Obidah fed with eagerness and gratitude.

When the repast was over, 'Tell me,' said the hermit, 'by what chance thou hast been brought hither; I have been now twenty years an inhabitant of the wilderness, in which I never saw a man before.' Obidah then related the occurrences of his journey, without any concealment or palliation.

'Son,' said the hermit, 'let the errors and follies, the dangers and escape of this day, sink deep into thy heart. Remember, my son, that human life is the journey of a day. We rise in the morning of youth, full of vigour, and full of expectation; we set forward with spirit and hope, with gaiety and with diligence, and travel on a while in the strait road of piety towards the mansions of rest. In a short time we

remit our fervour, and endeavour to find some mitigation of our duty, and some more easy means of obtaining the same end. We then relax our vigour, and resolve no longer to be terrified with crimes at a distance, but rely upon our own constancy, and venture to approach what we resolve never to touch. We thus enter the bowers of ease, and repose in the shades of security. Here the heart softens, and vigilance subsides; we are then willing to enquire whether another advance cannot be made, and whether we may not, at least, turn our eyes upon the gardens of pleasure. We approach them with scruple and hesitation; we enter them, but enter timorous and trembling, and always hope to pass through them without losing the road of virtue, which we, for a while, keep in our sight, and to which we propose to return. But temptation succeeds temptation, and one compliance prepares us for another; we in time lose the happiness of innocence, and solace our disquiet with sensual gratifications. By degrees we let fall the remembrance of our original intention, and quit the only adequate object of rational desire. We entangle ourselves in business, immerse ourselves in luxury, and rove through the labyrinths of inconstancy, till the darkness of old age begins to invade us, and disease and anxiety obstruct our way. We then look back upon our lives with horror, with sorrow, with repentance; and wish, but too often vainly wish, that we had not forsaken the ways of virtue. Happy are they, my son, who shall learn from thy example not to despair, but shall remember, that though the day is past, and their strength is wasted, there yet remains one effort to be made; that reformation is never hopeless, nor sincere endeavours ever unassisted; that the wanderer may at length return, after all his errors; and that he who implores strength and courage from above, shall find danger and difficulty give way before him. Go now, my son, to thy repose; commit thyself to the care of Omnipotence; and when the morning calls again to toil, begin anew thy journey and thy life.' *Rambler.*

§ 4. *The present Life to be considered only as it may conduce to the Happiness of a future one.*

A lewd young fellow seeing an aged hermit go by him barefoot, "Father," says he, "you are in a very miserable condition if there is not another world." "True, son,"

son," said the hermit: "but what is thy condition if there is?"—Man is a creature designed for two different states of being, or rather, for two different lives. His first life is short and transient; his second, permanent and lasting. The question we are all concerned in is this, In which of those two lives is it our chief interest to make ourselves happy? or, in other words, whether we should endeavour to secure to ourselves the pleasures and gratifications of a life which is uncertain and precarious, and, at its utmost length, of a very inconsiderable duration; or to secure to ourselves the pleasures of a life that is fixed and settled, and will never end? Every man, upon the first hearing of this question, knows very well which side of it he ought to close with. But however right we are in theory, it is plain that, in practice, we adhere to the wrong side of the question. We make provisions for this life, as though it were never to have an end; and for the other life, as though it were never to have a beginning.

Should a spirit of superior rank, who is a stranger to human nature, accidentally alight upon the earth, and take a survey of its inhabitants, what would his notions of us be? Would not he think, that we are a species of beings made for quite different ends and purposes than what we really are? Must not he imagine that we were placed in this world to get riches and honours? Would not he think that it was our duty to toil after wealth, and station, and title? Nay, would not he believe we were forbidden poverty by threats of eternal punishment, and enjoined to pursue our pleasures under pain of damnation? He would certainly imagine, that we were influenced by a scheme of duties quite opposite to those which are indeed prescribed to us. And truly, according to such an imagination, he must conclude that we are a species of the most obedient creatures in the universe; that we are constant to our duty; and that we keep a steady eye on the end for which we were sent hither.

But how great would be his astonishment, when he learnt that we were beings not designed to exist in this world above threescore and ten years; and that the greatest part of this busy species fall short even of that age! How would he be lost in horror and admiration, when he should know that this set of creatures, who lay out all their endeavours for this life, which scarce deserves the name of existence; when, I say, he should know that this set

of creatures are to exist to all eternity in another life, for which they make no preparations? Nothing can be a greater disgrace to reason, than that men, who are persuaded of these two different states of being, should be perpetually employed in providing for a life of threescore and ten years, and neglecting to make provision for that which, after many myriads of years, will be still new, and still beginning; especially when we consider that our endeavours for making ourselves great, or rich, or honourable, or whatever else we place our happiness in, may, after all, prove unsuccessful; whereas, if we constantly and sincerely endeavour to make ourselves happy in the other life, we are sure that our endeavours will succeed, and that we shall not be disappointed of our hope.

The following question is started by one of the schoolmen. Supposing the whole body of the earth were a great ball or mass of the finest sand, and that a single grain or particle of this sand should be annihilated every thousand years: Supposing then that you had it in your choice to be happy all the while this prodigious mass of sand was consuming by this slow method till there was not a grain of it left, on condition you were to be miserable for ever after; or supposing you might be happy for ever after, on condition you would be miserable till the whole mass of sand were thus annihilated, at the rate of one sand in a thousand years: which of these two cases would you make your choice?

It must be confessed in this case, so many thousands of years are to the imagination as a kind of eternity, though in reality they do not bear so great a proportion to that duration which is to follow them, as an unit does to the greatest number which you can put together in figures, or as one of those sands to the supposed heap. Reason therefore tells us, without any manner of hesitation, which would be the better part in this choice. However, as I have before intimated, our reason might in such a case be so overset by the imagination, as to dispose some persons to sink under the consideration of the great length of the first part of this duration, and of the great distance of that second duration, which is to succeed it. The mind, I say, might give itself up to that happiness which is at hand, considering that it is so very near, and that it would last so very long. But when the choice we actually have before us is this, whether we will chuse to be

happy for the space of only threescore and ten years, nay, perhaps, of only twenty or ten years, I might say, of only a day or an hour, and miserable to all eternity; or, on the contrary, miserable for this short term of years, and happy for a whole eternity; what words are sufficient to express that folly and want of consideration which in such a case makes a wrong choice!

I here put the case, even at the worst, by supposing (what seldom happens) that a course of virtue makes us miserable in this life; but if we suppose (as it generally happens) that virtue will make us more happy, even in this life, than a contrary course of vice; how can we sufficiently admire the stupidity or madness of those persons who are capable of making so absurd a choice!

Every wise man, therefore, will consider this life only as it may conduce to the happiness of the other, and cheerfully sacrifice the pleasures of a few years to those of an eternity.

Spektor.

§ 5. *The Advantages of a good Education.*

I consider an human soul without education like marble in the quarry, which shews none of its inherent beauties, until the skill of the polisher fetches out the colours, makes the surface shine, and discovers every ornamental cloud, spot, and vein, that runs through the body of it. Education, after the same manner, when it works upon a noble mind, draws out to view every latent virtue and perfection, which, without such helps, are never able to make their appearance.

If my reader will give me leave to change the allusion so soon upon him, I shall make use of the same instance to illustrate the force of education, which Aristotle has brought to explain his doctrine of substantial forms, when he tells us that a statue lies hid in a block of marble; and that the art of the statuary only clears away the superfluous matter, and removes the rubbish. The figure is in the stone, and the sculptor only finds it. What sculpture is to a block of marble, education is to an human soul. The philosopher, the saint, or the hero, the wise, the good, or the great man, very often lie hid and concealed in a plebeian, which a proper education might have dis-interred, and have brought to light. I am therefore much delighted with reading the accounts of savage nations, and with contemplating those

virtues which are wild and uncultivated; to see courage exerting itself in fierceness, resolution in obstinacy, wisdom in cunning, patience in fullness and despair.

Men's passions operate variously, and appear in different kinds of actions, according as they are more or less rectified and swayed by reason. When one hears of negroes, who upon the death of their masters, or upon changing their service, hang themselves upon the next tree, as it frequently happens in our American plantations, who can forbear admiring their fidelity, though it expresses itself in so dreadful a manner? What might not that savage greatness of soul, which appears in these poor wretches on many occasions, be raised to, were it rightly cultivated? And what colour of excuse can there be for the contempt with which we treat this part of our species; that we should not put them upon the common foot of humanity; that we should only set an insignificant fine upon the man who murders them; nay, that we should, as much as in us lies, cut them off from the prospects of happiness in another world, as well as in this, and deny them that which we look upon as the proper means for attaining it!

It is therefore an unspeakable blessing to be born in those parts of the world where wisdom and knowledge flourish; though it must be confessed there are, even in these parts, several poor uninstructed persons, who are but little above the inhabitants of those nations of which I have been here speaking; as those who have had the advantages of a more liberal education, rise above one another by several different degrees of perfection. For, to return to our statue in the block of marble, we see it sometimes only begun to be chipped, sometimes rough-hewn, and but just sketched into an human figure; sometimes we see the man appearing distinctly in all his limbs and features; sometimes we find the figure wrought up to great elegance; but seldom meet with any to which the hand of a Phidias or a Praxiteles could not give several nice touches and finishings.

Spektor.

§ 6. *The Disadvantages of a bad Education.*

Sir, I was condemned by some disastrous influence to be an only son, born to the apparent prospect of a large fortune, and allotted to my parents at that time of

life when satiety of common diversions al-

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lows the mind to indulge parental affection with greater intenseness. My birth was celebrated by the tenants with feasts, and dances, and bagpipes; congratulations were sent from every family within ten miles round; and my parents discovered, in my first cries, such tokens of future virtue and understanding, that they declared themselves determined to devote the remaining part of life to my happiness, and the encrease of their estate.

The abilities of my father and mother were not perceptibly unequal, and education had given neither much advantage over the other. They had both kept good company, rattled in chariots, glittered in playhouses, and danced at court, and were both expert in the games that were in their times called in as auxiliaries against the intrusion of thought.

When there is such a parity between two persons associated for life, the dejection which the husband, if he be not completely stupid, must always suffer for want of superiority, sinks him to submissiveness. My mamma therefore governed the family without controul; and, except that my father still retained some authority in the stables, and now and then, after a super-numerary bottle, broke a looking-glass or china-dish to prove his sovereignty, the whole course of the year was regulated by her direction, the servants received from her all their orders, and the tenants were continued or dismissed at her discretion.

She therefore thought herself entitled to the superintendence of her son's education; and when my father, at the instigation of the parson, faintly proposed that I should be sent to school, very positively told him, that she would not suffer a fine child to be ruined; that she never knew any boys at a grammar-school, that could come into a room without blushing, or sit at the table without some awkward uneasiness; that they were always putting themselves into danger by boisterous plays, or vitiating their behaviour with mean company; and that, for her part, she would rather follow me to the grave, than see me tear my cloaths, and hang down my head, and sneak about with dirty shoes and blotted fingers, my hair unpowdered, and my hat uncocked.

My father, who had no other end in his proposal than to appear wise and manly, soon acquiesced, since I was not to live by my learning; for indeed, he had known very few students that had not some stiff-

ness in their manner. They therefore agreed, that a domestic tutor should be procured; and hired an honest gentleman of mean conversation and narrow sentiments, but whom having passed the common forms of literary education, they implicitly concluded qualified to teach all that was to be learned from a scholar. He thought himself sufficiently exalted by being placed at the same table with his pupil, and had no other view than to perpetuate his felicity by the utmost flexibility of submission to all my mother's opinions and caprices. He frequently took away my book, lest I should mope with too much application, charged me never to write without turning up my ruffles, and generally brushed my coat before he dismissed me into the parlour.

He had no occasion to complain of too burthensome an employment; for my mother very judiciously considered, that I was not likely to grow politer in his company, and suffered me not to pass any more time in his apartment than my lesson required. When I was summoned to my task, she enjoined me not to get any of my tutor's ways, who was seldom mentioned before me but for practices to be avoided. I was every moment admonished not to lean on my chair, cross my legs, or swing my hands like my tutor; and once my mother very seriously deliberated upon his total dismissal, because I began, she said, to learn his manner of sticking on my hat, and had his bend in my shoulders, and his totter in my gait.

Such, however, was her care, that I escaped all these depravities; and when I was only twelve years old, had rid myself of every appearance of childish diffidence. I was celebrated round the country for the petulance of my remarks, and the quickness of my replies; and many a scholar five years older than myself, have I dashed into confusion by the steadiness of my countenance, silenced by my readiness of repartee, and tortured with envy by the address with which I picked up a fan, presented a snuff-box, or received an empty tea-cup.

At fourteen I was compleatly skilled in all the niceties of dress, and I could not only enumerate all the variety of silks, and distinguish the product of a French loom, but dart my eye through a numerous company, and observe every deviation from the reigning mode. I was universally skilful in all the changes of expensive

expensive finery; but as every one, they say, has something to which he is particularly born, was eminently knowing in Brussels lace.

The next year saw me advanced to the trust and power of adjusting the ceremonial of an assembly. All received their partners from my hand, and to me every stranger applied for introduction. My heart now disdained the instructions of a tutor; who was rewarded with a small annuity for life, and left me qualified, in my own opinion, to govern myself.

In a short time I came to London, and as my father was well known among the higher classes of life, soon obtained admission to the most splendid assemblies, and most crowded card-tables. Here I found myself universally caressed and applauded; the ladies praised the fancy of my clothes, the beauty of my form, and the softness of my voice; endeavoured in every place to force themselves to my notice; and invited, by a thousand oblique solicitations, my attendance to the play-house, and my salutations in the Park. I was now happy to the utmost extent of my conception; I passed every morning in dress, every afternoon in visits, and every night in some select assemblies, where neither care nor knowledge were suffered to molest us.

After a few years, however, these delights became familiar, and I had leisure to look round me with more attention. I then found that my flatterers had very little power to relieve the languor of satiety, or recreate weariness, by varied amusement; and therefore endeavoured to enlarge the sphere of my pleasures, and to try what satisfaction might be found in the society of men. I will not deny the mortification with which I perceived that every man whose name I had heard mentioned with respect, received me with a kind of tenderness nearly bordering on compassion; and that those whose reputation was not well established, thought it necessary to justify their understandings, by treating me with contempt. One of these wittlings elevated his crest, by asking me in a full coffee-house the price of patches; and another whispered, that he wondered Miss Frisk did not keep me that afternoon to watch her squirrel.

When I found myself thus hunted from all masculine conversation by those who were themselves barely admitted, I returned to the ladies, and resolved to dedicate

my life to their service and their pleasure. But I find that I have now lost my charms. Of those with whom I entered the gay world, some are married, some have retired, and some have so much changed their opinion, that they scarcely pay any regard to my civilities, if there is any other man in the place. The new flight of beauties, to whom I have made my addresses, suffer me to pay the treat, and then titter with boys. So that I now find myself welcome only to a few grave ladies, who, unacquainted with all that gives either use or dignity to life, are content to pass their hours between their bed and their cards, without esteem from the old, or reverence from the young.

I cannot but think, Mr. Rambler, that I have reason to complain; for surely the females ought to pay some regard to the age of him whose youth was passed in endeavours to please them. They that encourage folly in the boy, have no right to punish it in the man. Yet I find, that though they lavish their first fondness upon pertness and gaiety, they soon transfer their regard to other qualities, and ungratefully abandon their adorers to dream out their last years in stupidity and contempt.

I am, &c. Florentulus.
Rambler.

§ 7. *Omniscience and Omnipresence of the Deity, together with the Immensity of his Works.*

I was yesterday, about sun-set, walking in the open fields, till the night insensibly fell upon me. I at first amused myself with all the richness and variety of colours which appeared in the western parts of heaven: in proportion as they faded away and went out, several stars and planets appeared one after another, till the whole firmament was in a glow. The blueness of the æther was exceedingly heightened and enlivened by the season of the year, and the rays of all those luminaries that passed through it. The galaxy appeared in its most beautiful white. To complete the scene, the full moon rose at length in that clouded majesty which Milton takes notice of, and opened to the eye a new picture of nature, which was more finely shaded, and disposed among softer lights, than that which the sun had before discovered to us.

As I was surveying the moon walking in her brightness, and taking her progress among the constellations, a thought arose

in me, which I believe very often perplexes and disturbs men of serious and contemplative natures. David himself fell into it in that reflexion, 'When I consider the heavens the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou regardest him!' In the same manner, when I consider that infinite host of stars, or, to speak more philosophically, of suns which were then shining upon me, with those innumerable sets of planets or worlds, which were moving round their respective suns; when I still enlarged the idea, and supposed another heaven of suns and worlds rising still above this which we discovered, and these still enlightened by a superior firmament of luminaries, which are planted at so great a distance, that they may appear to the inhabitants of the former as the stars do to us; in short, while I pursued this thought, I could not but reflect on that little insignificant figure which I myself bore amidst the immensity of God's works.

Were the sun, which enlightens this part of the creation, with all the host of planetary worlds that move about him, utterly extinguished and annihilated, they would not be missed, more than a grain of sand upon the sea-shore. The space they possess is so exceedingly little in comparison of the whole, it would scarce make a blank in the creation. The chasm would be imperceptible to an eye, that could take in the whole compass of nature, and pass from one end of the creation to the other: as it is possible there may be such a sense in ourselves hereafter, or in creatures which are at present more exalted than ourselves. We see many stars by the help of glasses, which we do not discover with our naked eyes; and the finer our telescopes are, the more still are our discoveries. Huygenius carries this thought so far, that he does not think it impossible there may be stars whose light is not yet travelled down to us since their first creation. There is no question but the universe has certain bounds set to it; but when we consider that it is the work of infinite power, prompted by infinite goodness, with an infinite space to exert itself in, how can our imagination set any bounds to it?

To return, therefore, to my first thought, I could not but look upon myself with secret horror, as a being that was not worth the smallest regard of one who had so great a work under his care and superintend-

dency. I was afraid of being overlooked amidst the immensity of nature, and lost among that infinite variety of creatures, which in all probability swarm through all these immeasurable regions of matter.

In order to recover myself from this mortifying thought, I considered that it took its rise from those narrow conceptions, which we are apt to entertain of the divine nature. We ourselves cannot attend to many different objects at the same time. If we are careful to inspect some things, we must of course neglect others. This imperfection which we observe in ourselves, is an imperfection that cleaves in some degree to creatures of the highest capacities, as they are creatures, that is, beings of finite and limited natures. The presence of every created being is confined to a certain measure of space, and consequently his observation is stinted to a certain number of objects. The sphere in which we move, and act, and understand, is of a wider circumference to one creature than another, according as we rise one above another in the scale of existence. But the widest of these our spheres has its circumference. When therefore we reflect on the divine nature, we are so used and accustomed to this imperfection in ourselves, that we cannot forbear in some measure ascribing it to him in whom there is no shadow of imperfection. Our reason indeed assures us, that his attributes are infinite: but the poorness of our conceptions is such, that it cannot forbear setting bounds to every thing it contemplates, till our reason comes again to our succour, and throws down all those little prejudices which rise in us unawares, and are natural to the mind of man.

We shall therefore utterly extinguish this melancholy thought, of our being overlooked by our Maker in the multiplicity of his works, and the infinity of those objects among which he seems to be incessantly employed, if we consider, in the first place, that he is omnipresent; and in the second, that he is omniscient.

If we consider him in his omnipresence: his being passes through, actuates, and supports the whole frame of nature. His creation, and every part of it, is full of him. There is nothing he has made, that is either so distant, so little, or so inconceivable, which he does not essentially inhabit. His substance is within the substance of every being, whether material or immaterial, and as intimately present to it, as that being is to itself. It would be an imperfection

fection in him, were he able to move out of one place into another, or to draw himself from any thing he has created, or from any part of that space which he diffused and spread abroad to infinity. In short, to speak of him in the language of the old philosophers, he is a being whose centre is every where, and his circumference no where.

In the second place, he is omniscient as well as omnipresent. His omniscience indeed necessarily and naturally flows from his omnipresence. He cannot but be conscious of every motion that arises in the whole material world, which he thus essentially pervades; and of every thought that is stirring in the intellectual world, to every part of which he is thus intimately united. Several moralists have considered the creation as the temple of God, which he has built with his own hands, and which is filled with his presence. Others have considered infinite space as the receptacle, or rather the habitation of the Almighty: but the noblest and most exalted way of considering this infinite space, is that of Sir Isaac Newton, who calls it the *sensorium* of the Godhead. Brutes and men have their *sensoria*, or little *sensoriums*, by which they apprehend the presence and perceive the actions of a few objects, that lie contiguous to them. Their knowledge and observation turn within a very narrow circle. But as God Almighty cannot but perceive and know every thing in which he resides, infinite space gives room to infinite knowledge, and is, as it were, an organ to omniscience.

Were the soul separate from the body, and with one glance of thought should start beyond the bounds of the creation, should it for millions of years continue its progress through infinite space with the same activity, it would still find itself within the embrace of its Creator, and encompassed round with the immensity of the Godhead. While we are in the body he is not less present with us, because he is concealed from us. "Oh that I knew where I might find him!" (says Job.) Behold I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he does work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand that I cannot see him." In short, reason as well as revelation, assure us, that he cannot be absent from us, notwithstanding he is undiscovered by us.

In this consideration of God Almighty's omnipresence and omniscience, every uncomfortable thought vanishes. He cannot but regard every thing that has being, especially such of his creatures who fear they are not regarded by him. He is privy to all their thoughts, and to that anxiety of heart in particular, which is apt to trouble them on this occasion; for, as it is impossible he should overlook any of his creatures; so we may be confident that he regards, with an eye of mercy, those who endeavour to recommend themselves to his notice, and in unfeigned humility of heart think themselves unworthy that he should be mindful of them. *Spectator.*

§ 8. *Motives to Piety and Virtue, drawn from the Omniscience and Omnipresence of the Deity.*

In one of your late papers, you had occasion to consider the ubiquity of the Godhead, and at the same time to shew, that as he is present to every thing, he cannot but be attentive to every thing, and privy to all the modes and parts of its existence: or, in other words, that his omniscience and omnipresence are co-existent, and run together through the whole infinitude of space. This consideration might furnish us with many incentives to devotion, and motives to morality; but as this subject has been handled by several excellent writers, I shall consider it in a light in which I have not seen it placed by others.

First, How disconsolate is the condition of an intellectual being, who is thus present with his Maker, but at the same time receives no extraordinary benefit or advantage from this his presence!

Secondly, How deplorable is the condition of an intellectual being, who feels no other effects from this his presence, but such as proceed from divine wrath and indignation!

Thirdly, How happy is the condition of that intellectual being, who is sensible of his Maker's presence from the secret effects of his mercy and loving-kindness!

First, How disconsolate is the condition of an intellectual being, who is thus present with his Maker, but at the same time receives no extraordinary benefit or advantage from this his presence! Every particle of matter is actuated by this Almighty Being which passes through it. The heavens and the earth, the stars and planets, move and gravitate by virtue of this great principle

principle within them. All the dead parts of nature are invigorated by the presence of their Creator, and made capable of exerting their respective qualities. The several instincts, in the brute creation, do likewise operate and work towards the several ends which are agreeable to them, by this divine energy. Man only, who does not co-operate with his holy spirit, and is unattentive to his presence, receives none of these advantages from it, which are perfective of his nature, and necessary to his well-being. The divinity is with him, and in him, and every where about him, but of no advantage to him. It is the same thing to a man without religion, as if there were no God in the world. It is indeed impossible for an infinite Being to remove himself from any of his creatures; but though he cannot withdraw his essence from us, which would argue an imperfection in him, he can withdraw from us all the joys and consolations of it. His presence may perhaps be necessary to support us in our existence; but he may leave this our existence to itself, with regard to its happiness or misery. For, in this sense, he may cast us away from his presence, and take his holy spirit from us. This single consideration one would think sufficient to make us open our hearts to all those infusions of joy and gladness which are so near at hand, and ready to be poured in upon us; especially when we consider, Secondly, the deplorable condition of an intellectual being, who feels no other effects from his Maker's presence, but such as proceed from divine wrath and indignation!

We may assure ourselves, that the great Author of nature will not always be as one who is indifferent to any of his creatures. Those who will not feel him in his love, will be sure at length to feel him in his displeasure. And how dreadful is the condition of that creature, who is only sensible of the being of his Creator by what he suffers from him! He is as essentially present in hell as in heaven; but the inhabitants of those accursed places behold him only in his wrath, and shrink within the flames to conceal themselves from him. It is not in the power of imagination to conceive the fearful effects of Omnipotence incensed.

But I shall only consider the wretchedness of an intellectual being, who, in this life, lies under the displeasure of him, that at all times, and in all places, is intimately united with him. He is able to disquiet

the soul, and vex it in all its faculties. He can hinder any of the greatest comforts of life from refreshing us, and give an edge to every one of its slightest calamities. Who then can bear the thought of being an out-cast from his presence, that is, from the comforts of it, or of feeling it only in its terrors? How pathetic is that expostulation of Job, when for the real trial of his patience, he was made to look upon himself in this deplorable condition! 'Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am become a burden to myself?' But, thirdly, how happy is the condition of that intellectual being, who is sensible of his Maker's presence from the secret effects of his mercy and loving-kindness!

The blessed in heaven behold him face to face, that is, are as sensible of his presence as we are of the presence of any person whom we look upon with our eyes. There is doubtless a faculty in spirits, by which they apprehend one another, as our senses do material objects; and there is no question but our souls, when they are disembodied, or placed in glorified bodies, will by this faculty, in whatever part of space they reside, be always sensible of the divine presence. We, who have this veil of flesh standing between us and the world of spirits, must be content to know the spirit of God is present with us by the effects which he produceth in us. Our outward senses are too gross to apprehend him; we may however taste and see how gracious he is, by his influence upon our minds, by those virtuous thoughts which he awakens in us, by those secret comforts and refreshments which he conveys into our souls, and by those ravishing joys and inward satisfactions which are perpetually springing up, and diffusing themselves among all the thoughts of good men. He is lodged in our very essence, and is as a soul within the soul, to irradiate its understanding, rectify its will, purify its passions, and enliven all the powers of man. How happy therefore is an intellectual being, who by prayer and meditation, by virtue and good works, opens this communication between God and his own soul! Though the whole creation frowns upon him, and all nature looks black about him, he has his light and support within him, that are able to cheer his mind, and bear him up in the midst of all those horrors which encompass him. He knows that his helper is at hand, and is always nearer to him than any thing else can

can be, which is capable of annoying or terrifying him. In the midst of calumny or contempt, he attends to that Being who whispers better things within his soul, and whom he looks upon as his defender, his glory, and the lifter-up of his head. In his deepest solitude and retirement, he knows that he is in company with the greatest of beings; and perceives within himself such real sensations of his presence, as are more delightful than any thing that can be met with in the conversation of his creatures. Even in the hour of death, he considers the pains of his dissolution to be nothing else but the breaking down of that partition, which stands betwixt his soul, and the sight of that being who is always present with him, and is about to manifest itself to him in fulness of joy.

If we would be thus happy, and thus sensible of our Maker's presence, from the secret effects of his mercy and goodness, we must keep such a watch over all our thoughts, that in the language of the scripture, his soul may have pleasure in us. We must take care not to grieve his holy spirit, and endeavour to make the meditations of our hearts always acceptable in his sight, that he may delight thus to reside and dwell in us. The light of nature could direct Seneca to this doctrine, in a very remarkable passage among his epistles; *Sacer inest in nobis spiritus, bonorum malorumque custos et observator; et quemadmodum nos illum tractamus, ita et ille nos.* * There is a holy spirit residing in us, who watches and observes both good and evil men, and will treat us after the same manner that we treat him. But I shall conclude this discourse with those more emphatical words in divine revelation; * If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. †

Speziator.

§ 9. On the Immortality of the Soul.

I was yesterday walking alone in one of my friend's woods, and lost myself in it very agreeably, as I was running over in my mind the several arguments that establish this great point, which is the basis of morality, and the source of all the pleasing hopes and secret joys that can arise in the heart of a reasonable creature. I considered those several proofs drawn,

First, from the nature of the soul itself, and particularly its immateriality; which, though not absolutely necessary to the eter-

nity of its duration, has, I think, been evinced to almost a demonstration.

Secondly, from its passions and sentiments, as particularly from its love of existence, its horror of annihilation, and its hopes of immortality, with that secret satisfaction which it finds in the practice of virtue, and that uneasiness which follows in it upon the commission of vice.

Thirdly, from the nature of the Supreme Being, whose justice, goodness, wisdom, and veracity, are all concerned in this point.

But among these and other excellent arguments for the immortality of the soul, there is one drawn from the perpetual progress of the soul to its perfection, without a possibility of ever arriving at it; which is a hint that I do not remember to have seen opened and improved by others who have written on this subject, though it seems to me to carry a very great weight with it. How can it enter into the thoughts of man, that the soul, which is capable of such immense perfections, and of receiving new improvements to all eternity, shall fall away into nothing almost as soon as it is created? Are such abilities made for no purpose? A brute arrives at a point of perfection that he can never pass: in a few years he has all the endowments he is capable of; and were he to live ten thousand more, would be the same thing he is at present. Were a human soul thus at a stand in her accomplishments, were her faculties to be full blown, and incapable of farther enlargements, I could imagine it might fall away insensibly, and drop at once into a state of annihilation. But can we believe a thinking being, that is in a perpetual progress of improvements, and travelling on from perfection to perfection, after having just looked abroad into the works of its Creator, and made a few discoveries of his infinite goodness, wisdom, and power, must perish at her first setting out, and in the very beginning of her enquiries?

A man, considered in his present state, seems only sent into the world to propagate his kind. He provides himself with a successor, and immediately quits his post to make room for him.

Hor.

Harredem alterius, velut unda supervenit undam.

Hor. Ep. ii. l. 2. v. 175.

—Heir crowds heir, as in a rolling flood
Wave urges wave.

CREECH.

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He does not seem born to enjoy life, but to deliver it down to others. This is not surprizing to consider in animals, which are formed for our use, and can finish their business in a short life. The silk-worm, after having spun her task, lays her eggs and dies. But a man can never have taken in his full measure of knowledge, has not time to subdue his passions, establish his soul in virtue, and come up to the perfection of his nature, before he is hurried off the stage. Would an infinitely wise being make such glorious creatures for so mean a purpose? Can he delight in the production of such abortive intelligences, such short-lived reasonable beings? Would he give us talents that are not to be exerted? Capacities that are never to be gratified? How can we find that wisdom which shines through all his works, in the formation of man, without looking on this world as only a nursery for the next, and believing that the several generations of rational creatures, which rise up and disappear in such quick successions, are only to receive their first rudiments of existence here, and afterwards to be transplanted into a more friendly climate, where they may spread and flourish to all eternity?

There is not, in my opinion, a more pleasing and triumphant consideration in religion, than this of the perpetual progress which the soul makes towards the perfection of its nature, without ever arriving at a period in it. To look upon the soul as going on from strength to strength, to consider that she is to shine for ever with new accessions of glory, and brighten to all eternity; that she will be still adding virtue to virtue, and knowledge to knowledge; carries in it something wonderfully agreeable to that ambition which is natural to the mind of man. Nay, it must be a prospect pleasing to God himself, to see his creation for ever beautifying in his eyes, and drawing nearer to him, by greater degrees of resemblance.

Methinks this single consideration, of the progress of a finite spirit to perfection, will be sufficient to extinguish all envy in inferior natures, and all contempt in superior. That cherubim, which now appears as a God to a human soul, knows very well that the period will come about in eternity, when the human soul shall be as perfect as he himself now is: nay, when she shall look down upon that degree of perfection as much as she now falls short of it. It is true, the higher nature still advances,

and by that means preserves his distance and superiority in the scale of being; but he knows that, how high soever the station is of which he stands possessed at present, the inferior nature will at length mount up to it, and shine forth in the same degree of glory.

With what astonishment and veneration may we look into our own souls, where there are such hidden stores of virtue and knowledge, such inexhausted sources of perfection! We know not yet what we shall be, nor will it ever enter into the heart of man to conceive the glory that will be always in reserve for him. The soul, considered with its Creator, is like one of those mathematical lines that may draw nearer to another for all eternity without a possibility of touching it: and can there be a thought so transporting as to consider ourselves in these perpetual approaches to him, who is not only the standard of perfection, but of happiness!

Spectator.

§ 10. *The Duty of Children to their Parents.*

I am the happy father of a very tenderly son, in whom I do not only see my life, but also my manner of life renewed. It would be extremely beneficial to society, if you would frequently resume subjects which serve to bind these sort of relations faster, and endear the ties of blood with those of good-will, protection, observance, indulgence, and veneration. I would, methinks, have this done after an uncommon method; and do not think any one, who is not capable of writing a good play, fit to undertake a work wherein there will necessarily occur so many secret instincts and biases of human nature, which would pass unobserved by common eyes. I thank Heaven I have no outrageous offence against my own excellent parents to answer for; but when I am now and then alone, and look back upon my past life, from my earliest infancy to this time, there are many faults which I committed that did not appear to me, even until I myself became a father. I had not until then a notion of the yearnings of heart, which a man has when he sees his child do a laudable thing, or the sudden damp which seizes him when he fears he will act something unworthy. It is not to be imagined what a remorse touched me for a long train of childish negligences of my mother, when I saw my wife the other day look out of the window, and turn as pale as ashes upon seeing my younger

younger boy sliding upon the ice. These slight intimations will give you to understand, that there are numberless little crimes, which children take no notice of while they are doing, which, upon reflection, when they shall themselves become fathers, they will look upon with the utmost sorrow and contrition, that they did not regard, before those whom they offended were to be no more seen. How many thousand things do I remember, which would have highly pleased my father, and I omitted for no other reason but that I thought what he proposed the effect of humour and old age, which I am now convinced had reason and good sense in it! I cannot now go into the parlour to him, and make his heart glad with an account of a matter which was of no consequence, but that I told it and acted in it. The good man and woman are long since in their graves, who used to sit and plot the welfare of us their children, while, perhaps, we were sometimes laughing at the old folks at another end of the house. The truth of it is, were we merely to follow nature in these great duties of life, though we have a strong instinct towards the performing of them, we should be on both sides very deficient. Age is so unwelcome to the generality of mankind, and growth towards manhood so desirable to all, that resignation to decay is too difficult a task in the father; and deference, amidst the impulse of gay desires, appears unreasonable to the son. There are so few who can grow old with a good grace, and yet fewer who can come slow enough into the world, that a father, were he to be actuated by his desires, and a son, were he to consult himself only, could neither of them behave himself as he ought to the other. But when reason interposes against instinct, where it would carry either out of the interests of the other, there arises that happiest intercourse of good offices between those dearest relations of human life. The father, according to the opportunities which are offered to him, is throwing down blessings on the son, and the son endeavouring to appear the worthy offspring of such a father. It is after this manner that Camillus and his first-born dwell together. Camillus enjoys a pleasing and indolent old age, in which passion is subdued and reason exalted. He waits the day of his dissolution with a resignation mixed with delight, and the son fears the accession of his father's fortune with diffidence, lest he should not enjoy it or become it as well as

his predecessor. Add to this, that the father knows he leaves a friend to the children of his friends, an easy landlord to his tenants, and an agreeable companion to his acquaintance. He believes his son's behaviour will make him frequently remembered, but never wanted. This commerce is so well cemented, that without the pomp of saying, Son, be a friend to such a one when I am gone; Camillus knows, being in his favour is direction enough to the grateful youth who is to succeed him, without the admonition of his mentioning it. These gentlemen are honoured in all their neighbourhood, and the same effect which the court has on the manners of a kingdom, their characters have on all who live within the influence of them.

My son and I are not of fortune to communicate our good actions or intentions to so many as these gentlemen do; but I will be bold to say, my son has, by the applause and approbation which his behaviour towards me has gained him, occasioned that many an old man, besides myself, has rejoiced. Other men's children follow the example of mine; and I have the inexpressible happiness of overhearing our neighbours, as we ride by, point to their children, and say, with a voice of joy, "There they go."

Speaker.

§ 11. *The Strength of parental Affection.*

I went the other day to visit Eliza, who, in the perfect bloom of beauty, is the mother of several children. She had a little prating girl upon her lap, who was begging to be very fine, that she might go abroad; and the indulgent mother, at her little daughter's request, had just taken the knots off her own head to adorn the hair of the pretty trisler. A smiling boy was at the same time caressing a lap-dog, which is their mother's favourite, because it pleases the children; and she, with a delight in her looks, which heightened her beauty, so divided her conversation with the two pretty prattlers, as to make them both equally chearful.

As I came in, she said with a blush, "Mr. Ironside, though you are an old bachelor, you must not laugh at my tenderness to my children." I need not tell my reader what civil things I said in answer to the lady, whose matron-like behaviour gave me infinite satisfaction: since I myself take great pleasure in playing with children,

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children, and am seldom unprovided of plums or marbles, to make my court to such entertaining companions.

Whence is it, said I to myself when I was alone, that the affection of parents is so intense to their offspring? Is it because they generally find such resemblances in what they have produced, as that thereby they think themselves renewed in their children, and willing to transmit themselves to future times? or is it because they think themselves obliged by the dictates of humanity to nourish and rear what is placed so immediately under their protection; and what by their means is brought into this world, the scene of misery, of necessity? These will not come up to it. Is it not rather the good providence of that Being, who in a supereminent degree protects and cherishes the whole race of mankind, his sons and creatures? How shall we, any other way, account for this natural affection, so signally displayed throughout every species of the animal creation, without which the course of nature would quickly fail, and every various kind be extinct? Instances of tenderness in the most savage brutes are so frequent, that quotations of that kind are altogether unnecessary.

If we, who have no particular concern in them, take a secret delight in observing the gentle dawn of reason in babes; if our ears are soothed with their half-forming and aiming at articulate sounds; if we are charmed with their pretty mimicry, and surprised at the unexpected starts of wit and cunning in these miniatures of man: what transport may we imagine in the breasts of those, into whom natural instinct hath poured tenderness and fondness for them! how amiable is such a weakness of human nature! or rather, how great a weakness is it to give humanity so reproachful a name! The bare consideration of paternal affection, should, methinks, create a more grateful tenderness in children towards their parents, than we generally see; and the silent whispers of nature be attended to, though the laws of God and man did not call aloud.

These silent whispers of nature have had a marvellous power, even when their cause hath been unknown. There are several examples in story, of tender friendships formed betwixt men, who knew not of their near relation: Such accounts confirm me in an opinion I have long entertained, that there is a sympathy betwixt

souls, which cannot be explained by the prejudice of education, the sense of duty, or any other human motive.

The memoirs of a certain French nobleman, which now lie before me, furnish me with a very entertaining instance of this secret attraction, implanted by Providence in the human soul. It will be necessary to inform the reader, that the person whose story I am going to relate, was one, whose roving and romantic temper, joined to a disposition singularly amorous, had led him through a vast variety of gallantries and amours. He had, in his youth, attended a princess of France into Poland, where he had been entertained by the King her husband, and married the daughter of a grandee. Upon her death he returned into his native country; where his intrigues and other misfortunes having consumed his paternal estate, he now went to take care of the fortune his deceased wife had left him in Poland. In his journey he was robbed before he reached Warsaw, and lay ill of a fever, when he met with the following adventure; which I shall relate in his own words.

"I had been in this condition for four days, when the countess of Venoski passed that way. She was informed that a stranger of good fashion lay sick, and her charity led her to see me. I remembered her, for I had often seen her with my wife, to whom she was nearly related; but when I found she knew me not, I thought fit to conceal my name. I told her I was a German; that I had been robbed; and that if she had the charity to send me to Warsaw, the queen would acknowledge it, I having the honour to be known to her Majesty. The countess had the goodness to take compassion of me, and ordering me to be put in a litter, carried me to Warsaw, where I was lodged in her house until my health should allow me to wait on the queen.

"My fever increased after my journey was over, and I was confined to my bed for fifteen days. When the countess first saw me, she had a young lady with her, about eighteen years of age, who was much taller and better shaped than the Polish women generally are. She was very fair, her skin exceedingly fine, and her air and shape inexpressibly beautiful. I was not so sick as to overlook this young beauty; and I felt in my heart such emotions at the first view, as made me fear that all my misfortunes had not armed me sufficiently against the charms of the fair sex.

"The amiable creature seemed afflicted at my sickness; and she appeared to have so much concern and care for me, as raised in me a great inclination and tenderness for her. She came every day into my chamber to inquire after my health; I asked who she was, and I was answered, that she was niece to the countess of Venoski.

"I verily believe that the constant sight of this charming maid, and the pleasure I received from her careful attendance, contributed more to my recovery than all the medicines the physicians gave me. In short, my fever left me, and I had the satisfaction to see the lovely creature overjoyed at my recovery. She came to see me oftener as I grew better; and I already felt a stronger and more tender affection for her, than I ever bore to any woman in my life: when I began to perceive that her constant care of me was only a blind, to give her an opportunity of seeing a young Pole whom I took to be her lover. He seemed to be much about her age, of a brown complexion, very tall, but finely shaped. Every time she came to see me, the young gentleman came to find her out; and they usually retired to a corner of the chamber, where they seemed to converse with great earnestness. The aspect of the youth pleased me wonderfully; and if I had not suspected that he was my rival, I should have taken delight in his person and friendship.

"They both of them often asked me if I were in reality a German? which when I continued to affirm, they seemed very much troubled. One day I took notice that the young lady and gentleman, having retired to a window, were very intent upon a picture; and that every now and then they cast their eyes upon me, as if they had found some resemblance betwixt that and my features. I could not forbear to ask the meaning of it; upon which the lady answered, that if I had been a Frenchman, she should have imagined that I was the person for whom the picture was drawn, because it exactly resembled me. I desired to see it. But how great was my surprise, when I found it to be the very painting which I had sent to the queen five years before, and which she commanded me to get drawn to be given to my children! After I had viewed the piece, I cast my eyes upon the young lady, and then upon the gentleman I had thought to be her lover. My heart beat, and I felt a secret emotion which filled me with wonder. I thought I traced in the two young persons some of

my own features, and at that moment I said to myself, Are not these my children? The tears came into my eyes, and I was about to run and embrace them; but restraining myself with pain, I asked whose picture it was? The maid, perceiving that I could not speak without tears, fell a weeping. Her tears absolutely confirmed me in my opinion; and falling upon her neck, 'Ah, my dear child,' said I, 'yes, I am your father!' I could say no more. The youth seized my hands at the same time, and kissing, bathed them with his tears. Throughout my life, I never felt a joy equal to this; and it must be owned, that nature inspires more lively emotions and pleasing tenderness than the passions can possibly excite." *Spektator.*

§ 12. Remarks on the Swiftness of Time.

The natural advantages which arise from the position of the earth which we inhabit, with respect to the other planets, afford much employment to mathematical speculation, by which it has been discovered, that no other conformation of the system could have given such commodious distributions of light and heat, or imparted fertility and pleasure to so great a part of a revolving sphere.

It may be perhaps observed by the moralist, with equal reason, that our globe seems particularly fitted for the residence of a Being, placed here only for a short time, whose task is to advance himself to a higher and happier state of existence, by unremitted vigilance of caution, and activity of virtue.

The duties required of man are such as human nature does not willingly perform, and such as those are inclined to delay who yet intend some time to fulfil them. It was therefore necessary that this universal reluctance should be counteracted, and the drowsiness of hesitation wakened into resolve; that the danger of procrastination should be always in view, and the fallacies of security be hourly detected.

To this end all the appearances of nature uniformly conspire. Whatever we see on every side, reminds us of the lapse of time and the flux of life. The day and night succeed each other, the rotation of seasons diversifies the year, the sun rises, attains the meridian, declines and sets; and the moon every night changes its form.

The day has been considered as an image of the year, and a year as the representation

sensation of life. The morning answers to the spring, and the spring to childhood and youth; the noon corresponds to the summer, and the summer to the strength of manhood. The evening is an emblem of autumn, and autumn of declining life. The night with its silence and darkness shews the winter, in which all the powers of vegetation are benumbed; and the winter points out the time when life shall cease, with its hopes and pleasures.

He that is carried forward, however swiftly, by a motion equable and easy, perceives not the change of place but by the variation of objects. If the wheel of life, which rolls thus silently along, passed on through undistinguishable uniformity, we should never mark its approaches to the end of the course. If one hour were like another; if the passage of the sun did not shew that the day is wasting; if the change of seasons did not impress upon us the flight of the year; quantities of duration equal to days and years would glide unobserved. If the parts of time were not variously coloured, we should never discern their departure or succession, but should live thoughtless of the past, and careless of the future, without will, and perhaps without power to compute the periods of life, or to compare the time which is already lost with that which may probably remain.

But the course of time is so visibly marked, that it is even observed by the passage, and by nations who have raised their minds very little above animal instinct: there are human beings, whose language does not supply them with words by which they can number five, but I have read of none that have not names for Day and Night, for Summer and Winter.

Yet it is certain that these admonitions of nature, however forcible, however important, are too often vain; and that many who mark with such accuracy the course of time, appear to have little sensibility of the decline of life. Every man has something to do which he neglects; every man has faults to conquer which he delays to combat.

So little do we accustom ourselves to consider the effects of time, that things necessary and certain often surprise us like unexpected contingencies. We leave the beauty in her bloom, and, after an absence of twenty years; wonder, at our return, to find her faded. We meet those whom we left children, and can scarcely persuade

ourselves to treat them as men. The traveller visits in age those countries through which he rambled in his youth, and hopes for merriment at the old place. The man of business, wearied with unsatisfactory prosperity, retires to the town of his nativity, and expects to play away the last years with the companions of his childhood, and recover youth in the fields where he once was young.

From this inattention, so general and so mischievous, let it be every man's study to exempt himself. Let him that desires to see others happy, make haste to give while his gift can be enjoyed, and remember, that every moment of delay takes away something from the value of his benefaction. And let him who proposes his own happiness, reflect, that while he forms his purpose the day rolls on, and the night cometh, when no man can work.

Liller.

§ 13. *The Folly of mis-spending Time.*

An ancient poet, unreasonably discontented at the present state of things, which his system of opinions obliged him to represent in its worst form, has observed of the earth, "That its greater part is covered by the uninhabitable ocean; that of the rest, some is encumbered with naked mountains, and some lost under barren sands; some scorched with unintermitted heat, and some petrified with perpetual frost; so that only a few regions remain for the production of fruits, the pasture of cattle, and the accommodation of man."

The same observation may be transferred to the time allotted us in our present state. When we have deducted all that is absorbed in sleep, all that is inevitably appropriated to the demands of nature, or irresistibly engrossed by the tyranny of custom; all that passes in regulating the superficial decorations of life, or is given up in the reciprocations of civility to the disposal of others; all that is torn from us by the violence of disease, or stolen imperceptibly away by lassitude and languor; we shall find that part of our duration very small of which we can truly call ourselves masters, or which we can spend wholly at our own choice. Many of our hours are lost in a rotation of petty cares, in a constant recurrence of the same employments, many of our provisions for ease or happiness are always exhausted by the present day; and a great part of our

existence serves no other purpose, than that of enabling us to enjoy the rest.

Of the few moments which are left in our disposal, it may reasonably be expected, that we should be so frugal, as to let none of them slip from us without some equivalent; and perhaps it might be found, that as the earth, however straitened by rock and waters, is capable of producing more than all its inhabitants are able to consume, our lives, tho' much contracted by incidental distraction, would yet afford us a large space vacant to the exercise of reason and virtue; that we want not time, but diligence, for great performances; and that we squander much of our allowance, even while we think it sparing and insufficient.

This natural and necessary comminution of our lives, perhaps, often makes us insensible of the negligence with which we suffer them to slide away. We never consider ourselves as possessed at once of time sufficient for any great design, and therefore indulge ourselves in fortuitous amusements. We think it unnecessary to take an account of a few supernumerary moments, which, however employed, could have produced little advantage, and which were exposed to a thousand chances of disturbance and interruption.

It is observable, that, either by nature or by habit, our faculties are fitted to images of a certain extent, to which we adjust great things by division, and little things by accumulation. Of extensive surfaces we can only take a survey, as the parts succeed one another; and atoms we cannot perceive, till they are united into masses. Thus we break the vast periods of time into centuries and years; and thus, if we would know the amount of moments, we must agglomerate them into days and weeks.

The proverbial oracles of our parsimonious ancestors have informed us, that the fatal waste of fortune is by small expences, by the profusion of sums too little singly to alarm our caution, and which we never suffer ourselves to consider together. Of the same kind is the prodigality of life; he that hopes to look back hereafter with satisfaction upon past years, must learn to know the present value of single minutes, and endeavour to let no particle of time fall useless to the ground.

It is usual for those who are advised to the attainment of any new qualifications, to

look upon themselves as required to change the general course of their conduct, to dismiss their business, and exclude pleasure, and to devote their days or nights to a particular attention. But all common degrees of excellence are attainable at a lower price; he that should steadily and resolutely assign to any science or language those interstitial vacancies which intervene in the most crowded variety of diversion or employment, would find every day new irradiations of knowledge, and discover how much more is to be hoped from frequency and perseverance, than from violent efforts and sudden desires; efforts which are soon remitted when they encounter difficulty, and desires which, if they are indulged too often, will shake off the authority of reason, and range capriciously from one object to another.

The disposition to defer every important design to a time of leisure, and a state of settled uniformity, proceeds generally from a false estimate of the human powers. If we except those gigantic and stupendous intelligences who are said to grasp a system by intuition, and bound forward from one series of conclusions to another, without regular steps through intermediate propositions, the most successful students make their advances in knowledge by short flights, between each of which the mind may lie at rest. For every single act of progression a short time is sufficient; and it is only necessary, that whenever that time is afforded, it be well employed.

Few minds will be long confined to severe and laborious meditation; and when a successful attack on knowledge has been made, the student recreates himself with the contemplation of his conquest, and forbears another incursion till the new-acquired truth has become familiar, and his curiosity calls upon him for fresh gratifications. Whether the time of intermission is spent in company, or in solitude, in necessary business, or in voluntary levities, the understanding is equally abstracted from the object of enquiry; but, perhaps, if it be detained by occupations less pleasing, it returns again to study with greater alacrity than when it is gladdened with ideal pleasures, and surfeited with intemperance of application. He that will not suffer himself to be discouraged by fancied impossibilities, may sometimes find his abilities invigorated by the necessity of exerting them in short intervals, as the force of a current is increased by the contraction of its channel.

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From some cause like this, it has probably proceeded, that among those who have contributed to the advancement of learning, many have risen to eminence, in opposition to all the obstacles which external circumstances could place in their way, amidst the tumult of business, the distresses of poverty, or the dissipations of a wandering and unsettled state. A great part of the life of Erasmus was one continual peregrination: ill supplied with the gifts of fortune, and led from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom, by the hopes of patrons and preferment, hopes which always flattered and always deceived him; he yet found means, by unshaken constancy, and a vigilant improvement of those hours, which, in the midst of the most restless activity, will remain unengaged, to write more than another in the same condition would have hoped to read. Compelled by want to attendance and solicitation, and so much versed in common life, that he has transmitted to us the most perfect delineation of the manners of his age, he joined to his knowledge of the world such application to books, that he will stand for ever in the first rank of literary heroes. How this proficiency was obtained, he sufficiently discovers, by informing us, that the Praise of Folly, one of his most celebrated performances, was composed by him on the road to Italy; *ne totum illud tempus quo equo fuit insidendum, illiteratis fabulis sereretur*, lest the hours which he was obliged to spend on horseback should be tattered away without regard to literature.

An Italian philosopher expressed in his motto, *that time was his estate*; an estate, indeed, which will produce nothing without cultivation, but will always abundantly repay the labours of industry, and satisfy the most extensive desires, if no part of it be suffered to lie waste by negligence, to be over-run with noxious plants, or laid out for show rather than for use. *Rambler.*

§ 14. *The Importance of Time, and the proper Methods of spending it.*

We all of us complain of the shortness of time, saith Seneca, and yet have much more than we know what to do with. Our lives, says he, are spent either in doing nothing at all, or doing nothing to the purpose, or in doing nothing that we ought to do. We are always complaining our days are few, and acting as though there would be no end of them. That noble philosopher has described our inconsistency with

ourselves in this particular by all those various turns of expression and thought which are peculiar in his writings.

I often consider mankind as wholly inconsistent with itself, in a point that bears some affinity to the former. Though we seem grieved at the shortness of life, in general, we are wishing every period of it at an end. The minor longs to be at age, then to be a man of business, then to make up an estate, then to arrive at honours, then to retire. Thus, although the whole of life is allowed by every one to be short, the several divisions of it appear long and tedious. We are for lengthening our span in general, but would fain contract the parts of which it is composed. The usurer would be very well satisfied to have all the time annihilated that lies between the present moment and the next quarter-day. The politician would be contented to lose three years in his life, could he place things in the posture which he fancies they will stand in after such a revolution of time. The lover would be glad to strike out of his existence all the moments that are to pass away before the happy meeting. Thus, as fast as our time runs, we should be very glad, in most parts of our lives, that it ran much faster than it does. Several hours of the day hang upon our hands; nay, we with away whole years, and travel through time, as through a country filled with many wild and empty wastes which we would fain hurry over, that we may arrive at those several little settlements or imaginary points of rest which are dispersed up and down in it.

If we divide the life of most men into twenty parts, we shall find that at least nineteen of them are mere gaps and chasms, which are neither filled with pleasure nor business. I do not however include in this calculation the life of those men who are in a perpetual hurry of affairs, but of those only who are not always engaged in scenes of action; and I hope I shall not do an unacceptable piece of service to these persons, if I point out to them certain methods for the filling up their empty spaces of life. The methods I shall propose to them are as follow:

The first is the exercise of virtue, in the most general acceptation of the word. That particular scheme which comprehends the social virtues, may give employment to the most industrious temper, and find a man business more than the most active station of life. To advise the ignorant, relieve

relieve the needy, comfort the afflicted, are duties that fall in our way almost every day of our lives. A man has frequent opportunities of mitigating the fierceness of a party; of doing justice to the character of a deserving man; of softening the envious, quieting the angry, and rectifying the prejudiced; which are all of them employments suitable to a reasonable nature, and bring great satisfaction to the person who can busy himself in them with discretion.

There is another kind of virtue that may find employment for those retired hours in which we are altogether left to ourselves, and destitute of company and conversation; I mean that intercourse and communication which every reasonable creature ought to maintain with the great Author of his being. The man who lives under an habitual sense of the divine presence, keeps up a perpetual cheerfulness of temper, and enjoys every moment the satisfaction of thinking himself in company with his dearest and best of friends. The time never lies heavy upon him: it is impossible for him to be alone. His thoughts and passions are the most busied at such hours when those of other men are the most unactive. He no sooner steps out of the world but his heart burns with devotion, swells with hope, and triumphs in the consciousness of that presence which every where surrounds him; or, on the contrary, pours out its fears, its sorrows, its apprehensions, to the great Supporter of its existence.

I have here only considered the necessity of a man's being virtuous, that he may have something to do; but if we consider further, that the exercise of virtue is not only an amusement for the time it lasts, but that its influence extends to those parts of our existence which lie beyond the grave, and that our whole eternity is to take its colour from those hours which we here employ in virtue or in vice, the argument redoubles upon us, for putting in practice this method of passing away our time.

When a man has but a little stock to improve, and has opportunities of turning it all to good account, what shall we think of him if he suffers nineteen parts of it to be dead, and perhaps employs even the twentieth to his ruin or disadvantage?—But because the mind cannot be always in its fervours, nor strained up to a pitch of virtue, it is necessary to find out proper employments for it, in its relaxations.

The next method therefore that I would

propose to fill up our time, should be useful and innocent diversions. I must confess I think it is below reasonable creatures to be altogether conversant in such diversions as are merely innocent, and have nothing else to recommend them, but that there is no hurt in them. Whether any kind of gaming has even thus much to say for itself, I shall not determine; but I think it is very wonderful to see persons of the best sense passing away a dozen hours together in shuffling and dividing a pack of cards, with no other conversation but what is made up of a few game phrases, and no other ideas but those of black or red spots ranged together in different figures. Would not a man laugh to hear any one of this species complaining that life is short?

The stage might be made a perpetual source of the most noble and useful entertainments, were it under proper regulations.

But the mind never unbends itself so agreeably as in the conversation of a well-chosen friend. There is indeed no blessing of life that is any way comparable to the enjoyment of a discreet and virtuous friend. It eases and unloads the mind, clears and improves the understanding, engenders thought and knowledge, animates virtue and good resolution, soothes and allays the passions, and finds employment for most of the vacant hours of life.

Next to such an intimacy with a particular person, one would endeavour after a more general conversation with such as are capable of edifying and entertaining those with whom they converse, which are qualities that seldom go asunder.

There are many other useful amusements of life, which one would endeavour to multiply, that one might, on all occasions, have recourse to something rather than suffer the mind to lie idle, or run adrift with any passion that chances to rise in it.

A man that has a taste in music, painting, or architecture, is like one that has another sense, when compared with such as have no relish of those arts. The florist, the planter, the gardener, the husbandman, when they are only as accomplishments to the man of fortune, are great reliefs to a country life, and many ways useful to those who are possessed of them.

Spelator.

§ 15. *Mis-spent Time how punished.*

I was yesterday comparing the industry of

of man with that of other creatures; in which I could not but observe, that notwithstanding we are obliged by duty to keep ourselves in constant employ, after the same manner as inferior animals are prompted to it by instinct, we fall very short of them in this particular. We are here the more inexcusable, because there is a greater variety of business to which we may apply ourselves. Reason opens to us a large field of affairs, which other creatures are not capable of. Beasts of prey, and I believe of all other kinds, in their natural state of being, divide their time between action and rest. They are always at work or asleep. In short, their waking hours are wholly taken up in seeking after their food, or in consuming it. The human species only, to the great reproach of our nature, are filled with complaints, that "The day hangs heavy on them," that "They do not know what to do with themselves," that "They are at a loss how to pass away their time," with many of the like shameful murmurs, which we often find in the mouths of those who are styled reasonable beings. How monstrous are such expressions among creatures who have the labours of the mind, as well as those of the body, to furnish them with proper employments; who, besides the business of their proper callings and professions, can apply themselves to the duties of religion, to meditation, to the reading of useful books, to discourse; in a word, who may exercise themselves in the unbounded pursuits of knowledge and virtue, and every hour of their lives make themselves wiser or better than they were before!

After having been taken up for some time in this course of thought, I diverted myself with a book, according to my usual custom, in order to unbend my mind before I went to sleep. The book I made use of on this occasion was Lucian, where I amused my thoughts for about an hour among the dialogues of the dead, which in all probability produced the following dream.

I was conveyed, methought, into the entrance of the infernal regions, where I saw Rhadamanthus, one of the judges of the dead, seated on his tribunal. On his left hand stood the keeper of Erebus; on his right the keeper of Elysium. I was told he sat upon women that day, there being several of the sex lately arrived, who had not yet their mansions assigned them. I was surprised to hear him ask every one of them the same question, namely, "What they

had been doing?" Upon this question being proposed to the whole assembly, they stared one upon another, as not knowing what to answer. He then interrogated each of them separately. Madam, says he to the first of them, you have been upon the earth about fifty years; what have you been doing there all this while? Doing! says she, really I do not know what I have been doing: I desire I may have time given me to recollect. After about half an hour's pause, she told him that she had been playing at crimp; upon which Rhadamanthus beckoned to the keeper on his left hand, to take her into custody. And you, madam, says the judge, that look with such a soft and languishing air; I think you set out for this place in your nine-and-twentieth year, what have you been doing all this while? I had a great deal of business on my hands, says she, being taken up the first twelve years of my life in dressing a jointed baby, and all the remaining part of it in reading plays and romances. Very well, says he, you have employed your time to good purpose. Away with her. The next was a plain country-woman; Well, mistress, says Rhadamanthus, and what have you been doing? An't please your worship, says she, I did not live quite forty years; and in that time brought my husband seven daughters, made him nine thousand cheeses, and left my eldest girl with him, to look after his house in my absence, and who, I may venture to say, is as pretty a housewife as any in the country. Rhadamanthus smiled at the simplicity of the good woman, and ordered the keeper of Elysium to take her into his care. And you, fair lady, says he, what have you been doing these five-and-thirty years? I have been doing no hurt, I assure you, sir, said she. That is well, said he, but what good have you been doing? The lady was in great confusion at this question, and not knowing what to answer, the two keepers leaped out to seize her at the same time; the one took her by the hand to convey her to Elysium, the other caught hold of her to carry her away to Erebus. But Rhadamanthus observing an ingenuous modesty in her countenance and behaviour, bid them both let her loose, and set her aside for a re-examination when he was more at leisure. An old woman, of a proud and four look, presented herself next at the bar, and being asked what she had been doing? Truly, said she, I lived threescore-and-ten years in a very wicked world, and was so angry at the behaviour of a parcel of young firks,

that I passed most of my last years in condemning the follies of the times; I was every day blaming the silly conduct of people about me, in order to deter those I conversed with from falling into the like errors and miscarriages. Very well, says Rhadamanthus; but did you keep the same watchful eye over your own actions? Why truly, says she, I was so taken up with publishing the faults of others, that I had no time to consider my own. Madam, says Rhadamanthus, be pleased to file off to the left, and make room for the venerable matron that stands behind you. Old gentlewoman, says he, I think you are fourscore: you have heard the question, what have you been doing so long in the world? Ah, Sir! says she, I have been doing what I should not have done, but I had made a firm resolution to have changed my life, if I had not been snatched off by an untimely end. Madam, says he, you will please to follow your leader: and spying another of the same age, interrogated her in the same form. To which the matron replied, I have been the wife of a husband who was as dear to me in his old age as in his youth. I have been a mother, and very happy in my children, whom I endeavoured to bring up in every thing that is good. My eldest son is blest by the poor, and beloved by every one that knows him. I lived within my own family, and left it much more wealthy than I found it. Rhadamanthus, who knew the value of the old lady, smiled upon her in such a manner, that the keeper of Elysium, who knew his office, reached out his hand to her. He no sooner touched her, but her wrinkles vanished, her eyes sparkled, her cheeks glowed with blushes, and she appeared in full bloom and beauty. A young woman observing that this officer, who conducted the happy to Elysium, was so great a beautifier, longed to be in his hands; so that pressing through the crowd, she was the next that appeared at the bar. And being asked what she had been doing the five-and-twenty years that she had passed in the world? I have endeavoured, says she, ever since I came to years of discretion, to make myself lovely, and gain admirers. In order to it, I passed my time in bottling up May-dew, inventing white washes, mixing colours, cutting out patches, consulting my glass, suiting my complexion, tearing off my tucker, sinking my flays.—Rhadamanthus, without hearing her out, gave the sign to take her

off. Upon the approach of the keeper of Erebus, her colour faded, her face was puckered up with wrinkles, and her whole person lost in deformity.

I was then surprised with a distant sound of a whole troop of females, that came forward laughing, singing, and dancing. I was very desirous to know the reception they would meet with, and withal was very apprehensive, that Rhadamanthus would spoil their mirth: But at their nearer approach the noise grew so very great that it awakened me.

I lay some time, reflecting in myself on the oddness of this dream, and could not forbear asking my own heart, what I was doing? I answered myself that I was writing *Guardians*. If my readers make as good a use of this work as I design they should, I hope it will never be imputed to me as a work that is vain and unprofitable.

I shall conclude this paper with recommending to them the same short self-examination, If every one of them frequently lays his hand upon his heart, and considers what he is doing, it will check him in all the idle, or, what is worse, the vicious moments of life, lift up his mind when it is running on in a series of indifferent actions, and encourage him when he is engaged in those which are virtuous and laudable. In a word, it will very much alleviate that guilt which the best of men have reason to acknowledge in their daily confessions, of 'leaving undone those things which they ought to have done, and of doing those things which they ought not to have done.' *Guardian.*

§ 16. *A Knowledge of the Use and Value of Time very important to Youth.*

There is nothing which I more wish that you should know, and which fewer people do know, than the true use and value of time. It is in every body's mouth; but in few people's practice. Every fool who flatters away his whole time in nothings, utters, however, some trite common-place sentence, of which there are millions, to prove, at once, the value and the fleetness of time. The sun-dials, likewise, all over Europe, have some ingenious inscription to that effect; so that nobody squanders away their time, without hearing and seeing, daily, how necessary it is to employ it well, and how irrecoverable it is if lost. But all these admonitions are useless, where there is not a fund of good sense and reason

son to suggest them, rather than receive them. By the manner in which you now tell me that you employ your time, I flatter myself, that you have that fund: that is the fund which will make you rich indeed. I do not, therefore, mean to give you a critical essay upon the use and abuse of time; I will only give you some hints, with regard to the use of one particular period of that long time which, I hope, you have before you; I mean the next two years. Remember then, that whatever knowledge you do not solidly lay the foundation of before you are eighteen, you will never be master of while you breathe. Knowledge is a comfortable and necessary retreat and shelter for us in an advanced age; and if we do not plant it while young, it will give us no shade when we grow old. I neither require nor expect from you great application to books, after you are once thrown out into the great world. I know it is impossible; and it may even, in some cases, be improper; this, therefore, is your time, and your only time, for unwearied and uninterrupted application. If you should sometimes think it a little laborious, consider, that labour is the unavoidable fatigue of a necessary journey. The more hours a day you travel, the sooner you will be at your journey's end. The sooner you are qualified for your liberty, the sooner you shall have it; and your manumission will entirely depend upon the manner in which you employ the intermediate time. I think I offer you a very good bargain, when I promise you, upon my word, that, if you will do every thing that I would have you do, till you are eighteen, I will do every thing that you would have me do, ever afterwards.

Lord Chesterfield.

§ 17. On a lazy and trifling Disposition.

There are two sorts of understandings; one of which hinders a man from ever being considerable, and the other commonly makes him ridiculous; I mean the lazy mind, and the trifling frivolous mind. Yours, I hope, is neither. The lazy mind will not take the trouble of going to the bottom of any thing; but, discouraged by the first difficulties (and every thing worth knowing or having is attended with some) stops short, contents itself with easy, and, consequently, superficial knowledge, and prefers a great degree of ignorance, to a small degree of trouble. These people either think, or represent, most things as

impossible; whereas few things are so to industry and activity. But difficulties seem to them impossibilities, or at least they pretend to think them so, by way of excuse for their laziness. An hour's attention to the same object is too laborious for them; they take every thing in the light in which it at first presents itself, never consider it in all its different views; and, in short, never think it thorough. The consequence of this is, that when they come to speak upon these subjects before people who have considered them with attention, they only discover their own ignorance and laziness, and lay themselves open to answers that put them in confusion.

Do not then be discouraged by the first difficulties, but *contra audentior ito*: and resolve to go to the bottom of all those things, which every gentleman ought to know well. Those arts or sciences, which are peculiar to certain professions, need not be deeply known by those who are not intended for those professions. As, for instance, fortification and navigation; of both which, a superficial and general knowledge, such as the common course of conversation, with a very little enquiry on your part, will give you, is sufficient. Though, by the way, a little more knowledge of fortification may be of some use to you; as the event of war, in sieges, make many of the terms of that science occur frequently in common conversations; and one would be sorry to say, like the Marquis de Mascarille, in Moliere's *Précieuses Ridicules*, when he hears of *une demi Lune*: *Ma foi c'étoit bien une Lune toute entiere*. But those things which every gentleman, independently of profession, should know, he ought to know well, and dive into all the depths of them. Such are languages, history, and geography, ancient and modern: philosophy, rational logic, rhetoric; and for you particularly, the constitutions, and the civil and military state of every country in Europe. This, I confess, is a pretty large circle of knowledge, attended with some difficulties, and requiring some trouble, which, however, an active and industrious mind will overcome, and be amply repaid.

The trifling and frivolous mind is always busied, but to little purpose; it takes little objects for great ones, and throws away upon trifles that time and attention which only important things deserve. Knack-knacks, butterflies, shells, insects, &c. are the objects of their most serious researches. They

They contemplate the dress, not the characters, of the company they keep. They attend more to the decorations of a play, than to the sense of it; and to the ceremonies of a court, more than to its politics. Such an employment of time is an absolute loss of it.

Lord Chesterfield's Letters.

§ 13. *The bad Effects of Indolence.*

No other disposition, or turn of mind, so totally unfits a man for all the social offices of life, as Indolence. An idle man is a mere blank in the creation: he seems made for no end, and lives to no purpose. He cannot engage himself in any employment or profession, because he will never have diligence enough to follow it: he can succeed in no undertaking, for he will never pursue it; he must be a bad husband, father, and relation, for he will not take the least pains to preserve his wife, children, and family, from starving; and he must be a worthless friend, for he would not draw his hand from his bosom, though to prevent the destruction of the universe. If he is born poor, he will remain so all his life, which he will probably end in a ditch, or at the gallows: if he embarks in trade, he will be a bankrupt: and if he is a person of fortune, his stewards will acquire immense estates, and he himself perhaps will die in the Fleet.

It should be considered, that nature did not bring us into the world in a state of perfection, but has left us in a capacity of improvement; which should seem to intimate, that we should labour to render ourselves excellent. Very few are such absolute idiots, as not to be able to become at least decent, if not eminent, in their several stations, by unwearied and keen application: nor are there any possessed of such transcendent genius and abilities, as to render all pains and diligence unnecessary. Perseverance will overcome difficulties, which at first appear insuperable; and it is amazing to consider, how great and numerous obstacles may be removed by a continual attention to any particular point. I will not mention here, the trite example of Demosthenes, who got over the greatest natural impediments to oratory, but content myself with a more modern and familiar instance. Being at Sadler's Wells a few nights ago, I could not but admire the surprising feats of activity there exhibited; and at the same time reflected, what incredible pains and labour it must

have cost the performers to arrive at the art of writhing their bodies into such various and unnatural contortions. But I was most taken with the ingenious artist, who, after fixing two bells to each foot, the same number to each hand, and with great propriety placing a cap and bells on his head, played several tunes, and went through as regular triple peals and bob-majors, as the boys of Christ-church Hospital; all which he effected by the due jerking of his arms and legs, and nodding his head backward and forward. If this artist had taken equal pains to employ his head in another way, he might perhaps have been as deep a proficient in numbers as Jedediah Buxton, or at least a tolerable modern rhymers, of which he is now no bad emblem: and if our fine ladies would use equal diligence, they might fashion their minds as successfully, as Madam Catharina distorts her body.

There is not in the world a more useless, idle animal, than he who contents himself with being merely a gentleman. He has an estate, therefore he will not endeavour to acquire knowledge: he is not to labour in any vocation, therefore he will do nothing. But the misfortune is, that there is no such thing in nature as a negative virtue, and that absolute idleness is impracticable. He, who does no good, will certainly do mischief; and the mind, if it is not stored with useful knowledge, will certainly become a magazine of nonsense and trifles. Wherefore a gentleman, though he is not obliged to rise to open his shop, or work at his trade, should always find some ways of employing his time to advantage. If he makes no advances in wisdom, he will become more and more a slave to folly; and he that does nothing, because he has nothing to do, will become vicious and abandoned, or, at best, ridiculous and contemptible.

I do not know a more melancholy object, than a man of an honest heart, and fine natural abilities, whose good qualities are thus destroyed by indolence. Such a person is a constant plague to all his friends and acquaintance, with all the means in his power of adding to their happiness; and suffers himself to take rank among the lowest characters, when he might render himself conspicuous among the highest. Nobody is more universally beloved and more universally avoided, than my friend Careless. He is an humane man, who never did a beneficent action; and a man

of unshaken integrity, on whom it is impossible to depend. With the best head, and the best heart, he regulates his conduct in the most absurd manner, and frequently injures his friends; for, whoever neglects to do justice to himself, must inevitably wrong those with whom he is connected; and it is by no means a true maxim, that an idle man hurts nobody but himself.

Virtue then is not to be considered in the light of mere innocence, or abstaining from harm; but as the exertion of our faculties in doing good: as Titus, when he had let a day slip undisturbed by some act of virtue, cried out, 'I have lost a day.' If we regard our time in this light, how many days shall we look back upon as irretrievably lost! and to how narrow a compass would such a method of calculation frequently reduce the longest life! If we were to number our days, according as we have applied them to virtue, it would occasion strange revolutions in the manner of reckoning the ages of men. We should see some few arrived to a good old age in the prime of their youth, and meet with several young fellows of fourscore.

Agreeable to this way of thinking, I remember to have met with the epitaph of an aged man four years old; dating his existence from the time of his reformation from evil courses. The inscriptions on most tomb-stones commemorate no acts of virtue performed by the persons who lie under them, but only record, that they were born one day, and died another. But I would fain have those people, whose lives have been useless, rendered of some service after their deaths, by affording lessons of instruction and morality to those they leave behind them. Wherefore I could wish, that, in every parish, several acres were marked out for a new and spacious burying-ground: in which every person, whose remains are there deposited, should have a small stone laid over them, reckoning their age, according to the manner in which they have improved or abused the time allotted them in their lives. In such circumstances, the plate on a coffin might be the highest panegyric which the deceased could receive; and a little square stone inscribed with Ob. Ann. Æta. 80, would be a nobler eulogium, than all the lapidary adulation of modern epitaphs.

Connaisseur.

§ 19. *The innocent Pleasures of Childhood.*

As it is usual with me to draw a secret unenvied pleasure from a thousand incidents overlooked by other men, I threw myself into a short transport, forgetting my age, and fancying myself a school-boy.

This imagination was strongly favoured by the presence of so many young boys, in whose looks were legible the sprightly passions of that age, which raised in me a sort of sympathy. Warm blood thrilled through every vein; the faded memory of those enjoyments that once gave me pleasure, put on more lively colours, and a thousand gay amusements filled my mind.

It was not without regret, that I was forsaken by this waking dream. The cheapness of puerile delights, the guiltless joy they leave upon the mind, the blooming hopes that lift up the soul in the ascent of life, the pleasure that attends the gradual opening of the imagination, and the dawn of reason, made me think most men found that stage the most agreeable part of their journey.

When men come to riper years, the innocent diversions which exalted the spirits, and produced health of body, indolence of mind, and refreshing slumbers, are too often exchanged for criminal delights, which fill the soul with anguish, and the body with disease. The grateful employment of admiring and raising themselves to an imitation of the polite stile, beautiful images, and noble sentiments of ancient authors, is abandoned for law-latin, the lucubrations of our paltry news-mongers, and that swarm of vile pamphlets which corrupt our taste, and infest the public. The ideas of virtue, which the characters of heroes had imprinted on their minds, insensibly wear out, and they come to be influenced by the nearer examples of a degenerate age.

In the morning of life, when the soul first makes her entrance into the world, all things look fresh and gay; their novelty surprises, and every little glitter or gaudy colour transports the stranger. But by degrees the sense grows callous, and we lose that exquisite relish of trifles, by the time our minds should be supposed ripe for rational entertainments. I cannot make this reflection without being touched with a commiseration of that species called beans, the happiness of those men necessarily terminating

minating with their childhood, who, from a want of knowing other pursuits, continue a fondness for the delights of that age, after the relish of them is decayed.

Providence hath with a bountiful hand prepared a variety of pleasures for the various stages of life. It behoves us not to be wanting to ourselves in forwarding the intention of nature, by the culture of our minds, and a due preparation of each faculty for the enjoyment of those objects it is capable of being affected with.

As our parts open and display by gentle degrees, we rise from the gratifications of sense, to relish those of the mind. In the scale of pleasure, the lowest are sensual delights, which are succeeded by the more enlarged views and gay portraiture of a lively imagination; and these give way to the sublimer pleasures of reason, which discover the causes and designs, the frame, connection, and symmetry of things, and fill the mind with the contemplation of intellectual beauty, order, and truth.

Hence I regard our public schools and universities, not only as nurseries of men for the service of the church and state, but also as places designed to teach mankind the most refined luxury, to raise the mind to its due perfection, and give it a taste for those entertainments which afford the highest transport, without the grossness or remorse that attend vulgar enjoyments.

In those blessed retreats men enjoy the sweets of solitude, and yet converse with the greatest genii that have appeared in every age; wander through the delightful mazes of every art and science, and as they gradually enlarge their sphere of knowledge, at once rejoice in their present possessions, and are animated by the boundless prospect of future discoveries. There, a generous emulation, a noble thirst of fame, a love of truth and honourable regards, reign in minds as yet untainted from the world. There, the stock of learning, transmitted down from the ancients, is preserved, and receives a daily increase; and it is thence propagated by men, who, having finished their studies, go into the world, and spread that general knowledge and good taste throughout the land, which is so distant from the barbarism of its ancient inhabitants, or the fierce genius of its invaders. And as it is evident that our literature is owing to the schools and universities; so it cannot be

denied, that these are owing to our religion.

It was chiefly, if not altogether, upon religious considerations that princes, as well as private persons, have erected colleges, and assigned liberal endowments to students and professors. Upon the same account they meet with encouragement and protection from all christian states, as being esteemed a necessary means to have the sacred oracles and primitive traditions of christianity preserved and understood. And it is well known, that, after a long night of ignorance and superstition, the reformation of the church and that of learning began together, and made proportionable advances, the latter having been the effect of the former, which of course engaged men in the study of the learned languages and of antiquity.

Guardian.

§ 20. On *Chearfulness*.

I have always preferred cheerfulness to mirth. The latter I consider as an act, the former as a habit of the mind. Mirth is short and transient, cheerfulness fixed and permanent. Those are often raised into the greatest transports of mirth, who are subject to the greatest depressions of melancholy: on the contrary, cheerfulness, though it does not give the mind such an exquisite gladness, prevents us from falling into any depths of sorrow. Mirth is like a flash of lightning, that breaks through a gloom of clouds, and glitters for a moment; cheerfulness keeps up a kind of daylight in the mind, and fills it with a steady and perpetual serenity.

Men of austere principles look upon mirth as too wanton and dissolute for a state of probation, and as filled with a certain triumph and insolence of heart that is inconsistent with a life which is every moment obnoxious to the greatest dangers. Writers of this complexion have observed, that the sacred Person who was the great pattern of perfection, was never seen to laugh.

Chearfulness of mind is not liable to any of these exceptions; it is of a serious and composed nature; it does not throw the mind into a condition improper for the present state of humanity, and is very conspicuous in the characters of those who are looked upon as the greatest philosophers among the heathens, as well as among those who have been deservedly esteemed as saints and holy men among Christians.

If

If we consider chearfulness in three lights, with regard to ourselves, to those we converse with, and to the great Author of our being, it will not a little recommend itself on each of these accounts. The man who is possessed of this excellent frame of mind, is not only easy in his thoughts, but a perfect master of all the powers and faculties of the soul: his imagination is always clear, and his judgment undisturbed; his temper is even and unruffled, whether in action or solitude. He comes with a relish to all those goods which nature has provided for him, tastes all the pleasures of the creation which are poured about him, and does not feel the full weight of those accidental evils which may befall him.

If we consider him in relation to the persons whom he converses with, it naturally produces love and good-will towards him. A chearful mind is not only disposed to be affable and obliging, but raises the same good-humour in those who come within its influence. A man finds himself pleased, he does not know why, with the chearfulness of his companion: it is like a sudden sunshine, that awakens a secret delight in the mind, without her attending to it. The heart rejoices of its own accord, and naturally flows out into friendship and benevolence towards the person who has so kindly an effect upon it.

When I consider this chearful state of mind in its third relation, I cannot but look upon it as a constant habitual gratitude to the great Author of nature. An inward chearfulness is an implicit praise and thanksgiving to Providence under all its dispensations. It is a kind of acquiescence in the state wherein we are placed, and a secret approbation of the divine will in his conduct towards man.

There are but two things, which, in my opinion, can reasonably deprive us of this chearfulness of heart. The first of these is the sense of guilt. A man who lives in a state of vice and impenitence, can have no title to that evenness and tranquillity of mind which is the health of the soul, and the natural effect of virtue and innocence. Chearfulness in an ill man deserves a harder name than language can furnish us with, and is many degrees beyond what we commonly call folly or madness.

Atheism, by which I mean a disbelief of a Supreme Being, and consequently of a future state, under whatsoever title it shelters itself, may likewise very reasonably deprive a man of this chearfulness of tem-

per. There is something so particularly gloomy and offensive to human nature in the prospect of non-existence, that I cannot but wonder, with many excellent writers, how it is possible for a man to outlive the expectation of it. For my own part, I think the being of a God is so little to be doubted, that it is almost the only truth we are sure of, and such a truth as we meet with in every object, in every occurrence, and in every thought. If we look into the characters of this tribe of infidels, we generally find they are made up of pride, spleen, and cavil: it is indeed no wonder, that men, who are uneasy to themselves, should be so to the rest of the world; and how is it possible for a man to be otherwise than uneasy in himself, who is in danger every moment of losing his entire existence, and dropping into nothing?

The vicious man and Atheist have therefore no pretence to chearfulness, and would act very unreasonably, should they endeavour after it. It is impossible for any one to live in good-humour, and enjoy his present existence, who is apprehensive either of torment or of annihilation; of being miserable, or of not being at all.

After having mentioned these two great principles, which are destructive of chearfulness in their own nature, as well as in right reason, I cannot think of any other that ought to banish this happy temper from a virtuous mind. Pain and sickness, shame and reproach, poverty and old age, nay death itself, considering the shortness of their duration, and the advantage we may reap from them, do not deserve the name of evils. A good mind may bear up under them with fortitude, with indolence, and with chearfulness of heart. The tossing of a tempest does not discompose him, which he is sure will bring him to a joyful harbour.

A man, who uses his best endeavours to live according to the dictates of virtue and right reason, has two perpetual sources of chearfulness, in the consideration of his own nature, and of that Being on whom he has a dependence. If he looks into himself, he cannot but rejoice in that existence, which is so lately bestowed upon him, and which, after millions of ages, will be still new, and still in its beginning. How many self-congratulations naturally arise in the mind, when it reflects on this its entrance into eternity, when it takes a view of those improveable faculties, which

in a few years, and even at its first setting out, have made so considerable a progress, and which will be still receiving an increase of perfection, and consequently an increase of happiness! The consciousness of such a being spreads a perpetual diffusion of joy through the soul of a virtuous man, and makes him look upon himself every moment as more happy than he knows how to conceive.

The second source of cheerfulness to a good mind is, its consideration of that Being on whom we have our dependence, and in whom, though we behold him as yet but in the first faint discoveries of his perfections, we see every thing that we can imagine as great, glorious, or amiable. We find ourselves every where upheld by his goodness, and surrounded with an immensity of love and mercy. In short, we depend upon a Being, whose power qualifies him to make us happy by an infinity of means, whose goodness and truth engage him to make those happy who desire it of him, and whose unchangeableness will secure us in this happiness to all eternity.

Such considerations, which every one should perpetually cherish in his thoughts, will banish from us all that secret heaviness of heart which unthinking men are subject to when they lie under no real affliction, all that anguish which we may feel from any evil that actually oppresses us, to which I may likewise add those little cracklings of mirth and folly, that are apter to betray virtue than support it; and establish in us such an even and cheerful temper, as makes us pleasing to ourselves, to those with whom we converse, and to him whom we are made to please.

Spectator.

§ 21. *On the Advantages of a cheerful Temper.*

Cheerfulness is, in the first place, the best promoter of health. Repinings and secret murmurs of heart give imperceptible strokes to those delicate fibres of which the vital parts are composed, and wear out the machine insensibly; not to mention those violent ferments which they stir up in the blood, and those irregular disturbed motions, which they raise in the animal spirits. I scarce remember, in my own observation, to have met with many old men, or with such, who (to use our English phrase) wear well, that had not at least a certain indolence in their humour, if not

a more than ordinary gaiety and cheerfulness of heart. The truth of it is, health and cheerfulness mutually beget each other; with this difference, that we seldom meet with a great degree of health which is not attended with a certain cheerfulness, but very often see cheerfulness where there is no great degree of health.

Cheerfulness bears the same friendly regard to the mind as to the body: it banishes all anxious care and discontent, soothes and composes the passions, and keeps the soul in a perpetual calm. But having already touched on this last consideration, I shall here take notice, that the world in which we are placed, is filled with innumerable objects that are proper to raise and keep alive this happy temper of mind.

If we consider the world in its subserviency to man, one would think it was made for our use; but if we consider it in its natural beauty and harmony, one would be apt to conclude it was made for our pleasure. The sun, which is as the great soul of the universe, and produces all the necessaries of life, has a particular influence in cheering the mind of man, and making the heart glad.

Those several living creatures which are made for our service or sustenance, at the same time either fill the woods with their music, furnish us with game, or raise pleasing ideas in us by the delightfulness of their appearance. Fountains, lakes, and rivers, are as refreshing to the imagination, as to the soil through which they pass.

There are writers of great distinction, who have made it an argument for Providence, that the whole earth is covered with green, rather than with any other colour, as being such a right mixture of light and shade, that it comforts and strengthens the eye instead of weakening or grieving it. For this reason, several painters have green cloth hanging near them, to ease the eye upon, after too great an application to their colouring. A famous modern philosopher accounts for it in the following manner: All colours that are more luminous, overpower and dissipate the animal spirits which are employed in sight; on the contrary, those that are more obscure do not give the animal spirits a sufficient exercise; whereas, the rays that produce in us the idea of green, fall upon the eye in such a due proportion,

that

that they give the animal spirits their proper play, and, by keeping up the struggle in a just balance, excite a very pleasing and agreeable sensation. Let the cause be what it will, the effect is certain; for which reason, the poets ascribe to this particular colour the epithet of *cheerful*.

To consider further this double end in the works of nature, and how they are, at the same time, both useful and entertaining, we find that the most important parts in the vegetable world are those which are the most beautiful. These are the seeds by which the several races of plants are propagated and continued, and which are always lodged in flowers or blossoms. Nature seems to hide her principal design, and to be industrious in making the earth gay and delightful, while she is carrying on her great work, and intent upon her own preservation. The husbandman, after the same manner, is employed in laying out the whole country into a kind of garden or landscape, and making every thing smile about him, whilst, in reality, he thinks of nothing but of the harvest, and increase which is to arise from it.

We may further observe how Providence has taken care to keep up this cheerfulness in the mind of man, by having formed it after such a manner, as to make it capable of conceiving delight from several objects which seem to have very little use in them; as from the wildness of rocks and deserts, and the like grotesque parts of nature. Those who are versed in philosophy may still carry this consideration higher, by observing, that if matter had appeared to us endowed only with those real qualities which it actually possesses, it would have made but a very joyless and uncomfortable figure; and why has Providence given it a power of producing in us such imaginary qualities, as tastes and colours, sounds and smells, heat and cold, but that man, while he is conversant in the lower stations of nature, might have his mind cheered and delighted with agreeable sensations? In short, the whole universe is a kind of theatre filled with objects that either raise in us pleasure, amusement, or admiration.

The reader's own thoughts will suggest to him the vicissitude of day and night, the change of seasons, with all that variety of scenes which diversify the face of nature, and fill the mind with a perpetual succession of beautiful and pleasing images.

I shall not here mention the several en-

tertainments of art, with the pleasures of friendship, books, conversation, and other accidental diversions of life, because I would only take notice of such incitements to a cheerful temper, as offer themselves to persons of all ranks and conditions, and which may sufficiently shew us that Providence did not design this world should be filled with murmurs and repinings, or that the heart of man should be involved in gloom and melancholy.

I the more inculcate this cheerfulness of temper, as it is a virtue in which our countrymen are observed to be more deficient than any other nation. Melancholy is a kind of demon that haunts our island, and often conveys herself to us in an easterly wind. A celebrated French novelist, in opposition to those who begin their romances with a flowery season of the year, enters on his story thus: 'In the gloomy month of November, when the people of England hang and drown themselves, a disconsolate lover walked out into the fields,' &c.

Every one ought to fence against the temper of his climate or constitution, and frequently to indulge in himself those considerations which may give him a serenity of mind, and enable him to bear up cheerfully against those little evils and misfortunes which are common to human nature, and which, by a right improvement of them, will produce a satiety of joy, and an uninterrupted happiness.

At the same time that I would engage my reader to consider the world in its most agreeable lights, I must own there are many evils which naturally spring up amidst the entertainments that are provided for us; but these, if rightly considered, should be far from overcasting the mind with sorrow, or destroying that cheerfulness of temper which I have been recommending. This interspersion of evil with good, and pain with pleasure, in the works of nature, is very truly ascribed by Mr. Locke, in his Essay upon Human Understanding, to a moral reason, in the following words:

'Beyond all this, we may find another reason why God hath scattered up and down several degrees of pleasure and pain, in all the things that environ and affect us, and blended them together, in almost all that our thoughts and senses have to do with; that we, finding imperfection, dissatisfaction, and want of complete happiness in all the enjoyments which the creatures can afford us, might be

' be led to seek it in the enjoyment of him,
' with whom there is fulness of joy, and
' at whose right hand are pleasures for
' evermore.' *Spectator.*

§ 22. *On Truth and Sincerity.*

Truth and reality have all the advantages of appearance, and many more. If the shew of any thing be good for any thing, I am sure sincerity is better: for why does any man dissemble, or seem to be that which he is not, but because he thinks it good to have such a quality as he pretends to? for to counterfeit and dissemble, is to put on the appearance of some real excellency. Now the best way in the world for a man to seem to be any thing, is really to be what we would seem to be. Besides, that it is many times as troublesome to make good the pretence of a good quality, as to have it; and if a man have it not, it is ten to one but he is discovered to want it, and then all his pains and labour to seem to have it is lost. There is something unnatural in painting, which a skilful eye will easily discern from native beauty and complexion.

It is hard to personate and act a part long; for where truth is not at the bottom, nature will always be endeavouring to return, and will peep out and betray herself one time or other. Therefore, if any man think it convenient to seem good, let him be so indeed, and then his goodness will appear to every body's satisfaction; so that, upon all accounts, sincerity is true wisdom. Particularly as to the affairs of this world, integrity hath many advantages over all the fine and artificial ways of dissimulation and deceit; it is much the plainer and easier, much the safer and more secure way of dealing in the world; it has less of trouble and difficulty, of entanglement and perplexity, of danger and hazard in it; it is the shortest and nearest way to our end, carrying us thither in a straight line, and will hold out and last longest. The arts of deceit and cunning do continually grow weaker, and less effectual and serviceable to them that use them; whereas integrity gains strength by use; and the more and longer any man practiseth it, the greater service it does him, by confirming his reputation, and encouraging those with whom he hath to do to repose the greatest trust and confidence in him; which is an unspeakable advantage in the business and affairs of life.

Truth is always consistent with itself,

and needs nothing to help it out: it is always near at hand, and sits upon our lips, and is ready to drop out before we are aware; whereas a lie is troublesome, and sets a man's invention upon the rack, and one trick needs a great many more to make it good. It is like building upon a false foundation, which continually stands in need of props to shore it up, and proves at last more chargeable than to have raised a substantial building at first upon a true and solid foundation; for sincerity is firm and substantial, and there is nothing hollow or unsound in it, and because it is plain and open, fears no discovery; of which the crafty man is always in danger, and when he thinks he walks in the dark, all his pretences are so transparent, that he that runs may read them; he is the last man that finds himself to be found out, and whilst he takes it for granted that he makes fools of others, he renders himself ridiculous.

Add to all this, that sincerity is the most compendious wisdom, and an excellent instrument for the speedy dispatch of business; it creates confidence in those we have to deal with, saves the labour of many inquiries, and brings things to an issue in few words; it is like travelling in a plain beaten road, which commonly brings a man sooner to his journey's end than bye-ways, in which men often lose themselves. In a word, whatsoever convenience may be thought to be in falshood and dissimulation, it is soon over; but the inconvenience of it is perpetual, because it brings a man under an everlasting jealousy and suspicion, so that he is not believed when he speaks truth, nor trusted perhaps when he means honestly. When a man has once forfeited the reputation of his integrity, he is set fast, and nothing will then serve his turn, neither truth nor falshood.

And I have often thought that God hath, in his great wisdom, hid from men of false and dishonest minds, the wonderful advantages of truth and integrity to the prosperity even of our worldly affairs; these men are so blinded by their covetousness and ambition, that they cannot look beyond a present advantage, nor forbear to seize upon it, though by ways never so indirect; they cannot see so far as to the remote consequences of a steady integrity, and the vast benefit and advantages which it will bring a man at last. Were but this sort of men wise and clear-sighted enough to discern this, they would be honest out of very knavery, not out of any love to honesty

honestly and virtue, but with a crafty design to promote and advance more effectually their own interests; and therefore the justice of the divine providence hath hid this truest point of wisdom from their eyes, that bad men might not be upon equal terms with the just and upright, and serve their own wicked designs by honest and lawful means.

Indeed, if a man were only to deal in the world for a day, and should never have occasion to converse more with mankind, never more need their good opinion or good word, it were then no great matter (speaking as to the concerns of this world) if a man spent his reputation all at once, and ventured it at one throw: but if he be to continue in the world, and would have the advantage of conversation whilst he is in it, let him make use of truth and sincerity in all his words and actions; for nothing but this will last and hold out to the end: all other arts will fail, but truth and integrity will carry a man through, and bear him out to the last.

Speaker.

§ 23. *Rules for the Knowledge of One's Self.*

Hypocrisy, at the fashionable end of the town, is very different from that in the city. The modish hypocrite endeavours to appear more vicious than he really is; the other kind of hypocrite more virtuous. The former is afraid of every thing that has the shew of religion in it, and would be thought engaged in many criminal gallantries and amours, which he is not guilty of; the latter assumes a face of sanctity, and covers a multitude of vices under a seeming religious deportment.

But there is another kind of hypocrisy, which differs from both these, and which I intend to make the subject of this paper: I mean that hypocrisy, by which a man does not only deceive the world, but very often imposes on himself; that hypocrisy which conceals his own heart from him, and makes him believe he is more virtuous than he really is, and either not attend to his vices, or mistake even his vices for virtues. It is this fatal hypocrisy and self-deceit, which is taken notice of in these words, 'Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from my secret faults.'

If the open professors of impiety deserve the utmost application and endeavours of moral writers, to recover them from vice and folly, how much more may those lay

a claim to their care and compassion, who are walking in the paths of death, while they fancy themselves engaged in a course of virtue! I shall therefore endeavour to lay down some rules for the discovery of those vices that lurk in the secret corners of the soul; and to shew my reader those methods, by which he may arrive at a true and impartial knowledge of himself. The usual means prescribed for this purpose, are to examine ourselves by the rules which are laid down for our direction in sacred writ, and to compare our lives with the life of that person who acted up to the perfection of human nature, and is the standing example, as well as the great guide and instructor, of those who receive his doctrines. Though these two heads cannot be too much insisted upon, I shall but just mention them, since they have been handled by many great and eminent writers.

I would therefore propose the following methods to the consideration of such as would find out their secret faults, and make a true estimate of themselves.

In the first place, let them consider well, what are the characters which they bear among their enemies. Our friends very often flatter us as much as our own hearts. They either do not see our faults, or conceal them from us, or soften them by their representations, after such a manner, that we think them too trivial to be taken notice of. An adversary, on the contrary, makes a stricter search into us, discovers every flaw and imperfection in our tempers; and, though his malice may set them in too strong a light, it has generally some ground for what it advances. A friend exaggerates a man's virtues, an enemy inflames his crimes. A wise man should give a just attention to both of them, so far as they may tend to the improvement of the one, and the diminution of the other. Plutarch has written an essay on the benefits which a man may receive from his enemies; and among the good fruits of enmity, mentions this in particular, "that, by the reproaches which it casts upon us, we see the worst side of ourselves, and open our eyes to several blemishes and defects in our lives and conversations, which we should not have observed without the help of such ill-natured monitors."

In order likewise to come to a true knowledge of ourselves, we should consider, on the other hand, how far we may deserve the praises and approbations which

the world bestow upon us; whether the actions they celebrate proceed from laudable and worthy motives; and how far we are really possessed of the virtues, which gain us applause among those with whom we converse. Such a reflection is absolutely necessary, if we consider how apt we are either to value or condemn ourselves by the opinion of others, and to sacrifice the report of our own hearts to the judgment of the world.

In the next place, that we may not deceive ourselves in a point of so much importance, we should not lay too great a stress on any supposed virtues we possess, that are of a doubtful nature: and such we may esteem all those in which multitudes of men dissent from us, who are as good and wise as ourselves. We should always act with great cautiousness and circumspection, in points where it is not impossible that we may be deceived. Intemperate zeal, bigotry, and persecution, for any party or opinion, how praise-worthy soever they may appear to weak men of our own principles, produce infinite calamities among mankind, and are highly criminal in their own nature; and yet how many persons, eminent for piety, suffer such monstrous and absurd principles of action to take root in their minds under the colour of virtues? For my own part, I must own, I never yet knew any party so just and reasonable, that a man could follow it in its height and violence, and at the same time be innocent.

We should likewise be very apprehensive of those actions, which proceed from natural constitution, favourite passions, particular education, or whatever promotes our worldly interest or advantage. In these or the like cases, a man's judgment is easily perverted, and a wrong bias hung upon his mind. These are the inlets of prejudice, the unguarded avenues of the mind, by which a thousand errors and secret faults find admission, without being observed or taken notice of. A wise man will suspect those actions to which he is directed by something besides reason, and always apprehend some concealed evil in every resolution that is of a disputable nature, when it is conformable to his particular temper, his age, or way of life, or when it favours his pleasure or his profit.

There is nothing of greater importance to us, than thus diligently to sift our thoughts, and examine all these dark recesses of the mind, if we would establish

our souls in such a solid and substantial virtue as will turn to account in that great day, when it must stand the test of infinite wisdom and justice.

I shall conclude this essay with observing, that the two kinds of hypocrisy I have here spoken of, namely, that of deceiving the world, and that of imposing on ourselves, are touched with wonderful beauty in the hundred thirty-ninth psalm. The folly of the first kind of hypocrisy is there set forth by reflections on God's omniscience and omnipresence, which are celebrated in as noble strains of poetry as any other I ever met with, either sacred or profane. The other kind of hypocrisy, whereby a man deceives himself, is intimated in the two last verses, where the psalmist addresses himself to the great searcher of hearts in that emphatical petition; "Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart; prove me and examine my thoughts: look well if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." *Spectator.*

§ 24. *No Life pleasing to God, but that which is useful to Mankind. An Eastern Story.*

It pleased our mighty sovereign Abbas Carafcan, from whom the kings of the earth derive honour and dominion, to set Mirza his servant over the province of Tauris. In the hand of Mirza, the balance of distribution was suspended with impartiality; and under his administration the weak were protected, the learned received honour, and the diligent became rich: Mirza, therefore, was beheld by every eye with complacency, and every tongue pronounced blessings upon his head. But it was observed that he derived no joy from the benefits which he diffused; he became pensive and melancholy; he spent his leisure in solitude; in his palace he sat motionless upon a sofa; and when he went out, his walk was slow, and his eyes were fixed upon the ground: he applied to the business of state with reluctance; and resolved to relinquish the toil of government, of which he could no longer enjoy the reward.

He, therefore, obtained permission to approach the throne of our sovereign; and being asked what was his request, he made this reply: "May the Lord of the world forgive the slave whom he has honoured, if Mirza presume again to lay the bounty of Abbas at his feet. Thou hast given

"given me the dominion of a country;
 "fruitful as the gardens of Damascus;
 "and a city glorious above all others, ex-
 "cept that only which reflects the splen-
 "dour of thy presence. But the longest
 "life is a period scarce sufficient to pre-
 "pare for death: all other business is vain
 "and trivial, as the toil of emmets in the
 "path of the traveller, under whose foot
 "they perish for ever; and all enjoyment
 "is unsubstantial and evanescent, as the
 "colours of the bow that appears in the
 "interval of a storm. Suffer me, there-
 "fore, to prepare for the approach of
 "eternity; let me give up my soul to
 "meditation; let solitude and silence ac-
 "quaint me with the mysteries of devo-
 "tion; let me forget the world, and by
 "the world be forgotten, till the moment
 "arrives in which the veil of eternity shall
 "fall, and I shall be found at the bar of
 "the Almighty." Mirza then bowed
 himself to the earth, and stood silent.

By the command of Abbas it is record-
 ed, that at these words he trembled upon
 the throne, at the footstool of which the
 world pays homage; he looked round
 upon his nobles; but every countenance
 was pale, and every eye was upon the earth.
 No man opened his mouth; and the king
 first broke silence, after it had continued
 near an hour.

"Mirza, terror and doubt are come
 "upon me. I am alarmed as a man who
 "suddenly perceives that he is near the
 "brink of a precipice, and is urged for-
 "ward by an irresistible force: but yet I
 "know not whether my danger is a rea-
 "lity or a dream. I am as thou art, a
 "reptile of the earth: my life is a mo-
 "ment, and eternity, in which days, and
 "years, and ages, are nothing, eternity is
 "before me, for which I also should pre-
 "pare: but by whom then must the Faith-
 "ful be governed? by those only, who
 "have no fear of judgment? by those
 "only, whose life is brutal, because like
 "brutes they do not consider that they
 "shall die? Or who, indeed, are the
 "Faithful? Are the busy multitudes that
 "crowd the city, in a state of perdition?
 "and is the cell of the Dervise alone the
 "gate of Paradise? To all, the life of a
 "Dervise is not possible: to all, there-
 "fore, it cannot be a duty. Depart to
 "the house which has in this city been
 "prepared for thy residence: I will me-
 "ditate the reason of thy request; and
 "may He who illuminates the mind of the

"humble, enable me to determine with
 "wisdom."

Mirza departed; and on the third day,
 having received no command, he again
 requested an audience, and it was granted.
 When he entered the royal presence, his
 countenance appeared more chearful; he
 drew a letter from his bosom, and having
 kissed it, he presented it with his right-
 hand. "My Lord!" said he, "I have
 "learned by this letter, which I received
 "from Cosrou the Iman, who stands now
 "before thee, in what manner life may
 "be best improved. I am enabled to
 "look back with pleasure, and forward
 "with hope; and I shall now rejoice still
 "to be the shadow of thy power at Tauris,
 "and to keep those honours which I so
 "lately wished to resign." The king,
 who had listened to Mirza with a mixture
 of surprize and curiosity, immediately gave
 the letter to Cosrou, and commanded that
 it should be read. The eyes of the court
 were at once turned upon the hoary sage,
 whose countenance was suffused with an
 honest blush; and it was not without some
 hesitation that he read these words.

"To Mirza, whom the wisdom of Ab-
 "bas our mighty Lord has honoured with
 "dominion, be everlasting health! When
 "I heard thy purpose to withdraw the
 "blessings of thy government from the
 "thousands of Tauris, my heart was
 "wounded with the arrow of affliction,
 "and my eyes became dim with sorrow.
 "But who shall speak before the king
 "when he is troubled; and who shall boast
 "of knowledge, when he is distressed by
 "doubt? To thee will I relate the events
 "of my youth, which thou hast renewed
 "before me; and those truths which they
 "taught me, may the Prophet multiply to
 "thee!

"Under the instruction of the physician
 "Aluzar, I obtained an early knowledge
 "of his art. To those who were smitten
 "with disease, I could administer plants,
 "which the sun has impregnated with the
 "spirit of health. But the scenes of pain,
 "langour, and mortality, which were per-
 "petually rising before me, made me of-
 "ten tremble for myself. I saw the grave
 "open at my feet: I determined, there-
 "fore, to contemplate only the regions
 "beyond it, and to despise every acqui-
 "sition which I could not keep. I con-
 "ceived an opinion, that as there was no
 "merit but in voluntary poverty, and
 "silent meditation, those who desired mo-

"ney were not proper objects of bounty;
 "and that by all who were proper objects
 "of bounty money was despised. I,
 "therefore, buried mine in the earth;
 "and renouncing society, I wandered
 "into a wild and sequestered part of the
 "country: my dwelling was a cave by
 "the side of a hill; I drank the running
 "water from the spring, and ate such
 "fruits and herbs as I could find. To
 "increase the austerity of my life, I fre-
 "quently watched all night, sitting at the
 "entrance of the cave with my face to
 "the east, resigning myself to the secret
 "influences of the Prophet, and expecting
 "illuminations from above. One morn-
 "ing after my nocturnal vigil, just as I
 "perceived the horizon glow at the ap-
 "proach of the sun, the power of sleep
 "became irresistible, and I sunk under it.
 "I imagined myself still sitting at the
 "entrance of my cell; that the dawn in-
 "creased; and that as I looked earnestly
 "for the first beam of day, a dark spot
 "appeared to intercept it. I perceived
 "that it was in motion; it increased in
 "size as it drew near, and at length I dis-
 "covered it to be an eagle. I still kept
 "my eye fixed stedfastly upon it, and saw
 "it alight at a small distance, where I now
 "descried a fox whose two fore-legs ap-
 "peared to be broken. Before this fox
 "the eagle laid part of a kid, which she
 "had brought in her talons, and then dis-
 "appeared. When I awaked, I laid my
 "forehead upon the ground, and blessed
 "the Prophet for the instruction of the
 "morning. I reviewed my dream, and
 "said thus to myself: Cofrou, thou hast
 "done well to renounce the tumult, the
 "business, and vanities of life: but thou
 "hast as yet only done it in part; thou
 "art still every day busied in the search
 "of food, thy mind is not wholly at rest,
 "neither is thy trust in Providence com-
 "plete. What art thou taught by this
 "vision? If thou hast seen an eagle com-
 "missioned by Heaven to feed a fox that
 "is lame, shall not the hand of Heaven
 "also supply thee with food; when that
 "which prevents thee from procuring it
 "for thyself, is not necessity but devotion?
 "I was now so confident of a miraculous
 "supply, that I neglected to walk out for
 "my repast, which, after the first day, I
 "expected with an impatience that left
 "me little power of attending to any other
 "object: this impatience, however, I la-
 "boured to suppress, and persisted in my

"resolution; but my eyes at length began
 "to fail me, and my knees smote each
 "other; I threw myself backward, and
 "hoped my weakness would soon increase
 "to insensibility. But I was suddenly
 "roused by the voice of an invisible being,
 "who pronounced these words: 'Cof-
 "rou, I am the angel, who by the command
 "of the Almighty, have registered the
 "thoughts of thy heart, which I am now
 "commissioned to reprove. While thou
 "wast attempting to become wise above that
 "which is revealed, thy folly has perverted
 "the instruction which was vouchsafed thee.
 "Art thou disabled as the Fox? hast thou
 "not rather the powers of the Eagle? Arise,
 "let the Eagle be the object of thy emula-
 "tion. To pain and sickness, be thou again
 "the messenger of ease and health. Virtue
 "is not rest, but action. If thou dost good
 "to man as an evidence of thy love to God,
 "thy virtue will be exalted from moral to
 "divine; and that happiness which is the
 "pledge of Paradise, will be thy reward
 "upon earth.'

"At these words I was not less asto-
 "nished than if a mountain had been
 "overturned at my feet. I humbled my-
 "self in the dust; I returned to the city;
 "I dug up my treasure; I was liberal, yet I
 "became rich. My skill in restoring health
 "to the body gave me frequent opportu-
 "nities of curing the diseases of the soul.
 "I put on the sacred vestments; I grew
 "eminent beyond my merit; and it was
 "the pleasure of the king that I should
 "stand before him. Now, therefore, be
 "not offended; I boast of no knowledge
 "that I have not received: As the sands
 "of the desert drink up the drops of rain,
 "or the dew of the morning, so do I
 "also, who am but dust, imbibe the in-
 "structions of the prophet. Believe then
 "that it is he who tells thee, all know-
 "ledge is profane, which terminates in
 "thyself; and by a life wasted in specu-
 "lation, little even of this can be gained.
 "When the gates of Paradise are thrown
 "open before thee, thy mind shall be irra-
 "diated in a moment; here thou canst
 "little more than pile error upon error;
 "there thou shalt build truth upon truth.
 "Wait, therefore, for the glorious vision;
 "and in the mean time emulate the Ea-
 "gle. Much is in thy power; and, there-
 "fore, much is expected of thee. Though
 "the ALMIGHTY only can give virtue,
 "yet, as a prince, thou may'st stimulate
 "those to beneficence, who act from no
 "higher

" higher motive than immediate interest; thou canst not produce the principle, but may'st enforce the practice. The relief of the poor is equal, whether they receive it from ostentation, or charity; and the effect of example is the same, whether it be intended to obtain the favour of God or man. Let thy virtue be thus diffused; and if thou believest with reverence, thou shalt be accepted above. Farewell. May the smile of Him who resides in the Heaven of Heavens be upon thee! and against thy name, in the volume of His will, may Happiness be written!"

The King, whose doubts like those of Mirza, were now removed, looked up with a smile that communicated the joy of his mind. He dismissed the prince to his government; and commanded these events to be recorded, to the end that posterity may know "that no life is pleasing to God, but that which is useful to Mankind."

Adventurer.

§ 25. *Providence proved from Animal Instinct.*

I must confess I am infinitely delighted with those speculations of nature which are to be made in a country life; and as my reading has very much lain among books of natural history, I cannot forbear recollecting, upon this occasion, the several remarks which I have met with in authors, and comparing them with what falls under my own observation; the arguments for Providence, drawn from the natural history of animals, being, in my opinion, demonstrative.

The make of every kind of animal is different from that of every other kind; and yet there is not the least turn in the muscles or twist in the fibres of any one, which does not render them more proper for that particular animal's way of life, than any other cast or texture of them would have been.

The most violent appetites in all creatures are *lust* and *hunger*: the first is a perpetual call upon them to propagate their kind; the latter to preserve themselves.

It is astonishing to consider the different degrees of care that descend from the parent of the young, so far as is absolutely necessary for the leaving a posterity. Some creatures cast their eggs as chance directs them, and think of them no farther, as insects, and several kind of fish; others, of a nicer frame, find out proper beds to deposit

them in, and there leave them, as the serpent, the crocodile, and ostrich; others hatch their eggs and tend the birth, until it is able to shift for itself.

What can we call the principle which directs every different kind of bird to observe a particular plan in the structure of its nest, and directs all of the same species to work after the same model? It cannot be *imitation*; for though you hatch a crow under a hen, and never let it see any of the works of its own kind, the nest it makes shall be the same, to the laying of a stick, with all the nests of the same species. It cannot be *reason*; for were animals endued with it to as great a degree as man, their buildings would be as different as ours, according to the different conveniences that they would propose to themselves.

Is it not remarkable that the same temper of weather which raises this general warmth in animals, should cover the trees with leaves, and the fields with grass, for their security and concealment, and produce such infinite swarms of insects for the support and sustenance of their respective broods?

Is it not wonderful, that the love of the parent should be so violent while it lasts, and that it should last no longer than is necessary for the preservation of the young?

The violence of this natural love is exemplified by a very barbarous experiment; which I shall quote at length, as I find it in an excellent author, and hope my readers will pardon the mentioning such an instance of cruelty, because there is nothing can so effectually shew the strength of that principle in animals of which I am here speaking. "A person, who was well skilled in dissections, opened a bitch, and as she lay in the most exquisite torture, offered her one of her young puppies, which she immediately fell a licking; and for the time seemed insensible of her pain: on the removal, she kept her eye fixed on it, and began a wailing sort of cry, which seemed rather to proceed from the loss of her young one, than the sense of her own torments."

But notwithstanding this natural love in brutes is much more violent and intense than in rational creatures, Providence has taken care that it should be no longer troublesome to the parent than it is useful to the young; for so soon as the wants of the latter cease, the mother withdraws her fondness, and leaves them to provide for themselves: and what is a very remarkable circumstance

circumstance in this part of instinct, we find that the love of the parent may be lengthened out beyond its usual time, if the preservation of the species requires it; as we may see in birds that drive away their young as soon as they are able to get their livelihood, but continue to feed them if they are tied to the nest, or confined within a cage, or by any other means appear to be out of a condition of supplying their own necessities.

This natural love is not observed in animals to ascend from the young to the parent, which is not at all necessary for the continuance of the species: nor indeed in reasonable creatures does it rise in any proportion, as it spreads itself downwards; for in all family affection, we find protection granted, and favours bestowed, are greater motives to love and tenderness, than safety, benefits, or life received.

One would wonder to hear sceptical men disputing for the reason of animals, and telling us it is only our pride and prejudices that will not allow them the use of that faculty.

Reason shews itself in all occurrences of life; whereas the brute makes no discovery of such a talent, but what immediately regards his own preservation, or the continuance of his species. Animals in their generation are wiser than the sons of men; but their wisdom is confined to a few particulars, and lies in a very narrow compass. Take a brute out of his instinct, and you find him wholly deprived of understanding.—To use an instance that comes often under observation:

With what caution does the hen provide herself a nest in places unfrequented, and free from noise and disturbance! When she has laid her eggs in such a manner that she can cover them, what care does she take in turning them frequently, that all parts may partake of the vital warmth! When she leaves them, to provide for her necessary sustenance, how punctually does she return before they have time to cool, and become incapable of producing an animal! In the summer you see her giving herself greater freedoms, and quitting her care for above two hours together; but in winter, when the rigour of the season would chill the principles of life, and destroy the young one, she grows more assiduous in her attendance, and stays away but half the time. When the birth approaches, with how much nicety and attention does she help the chick to break its prison! Not to take notice of

her covering it from the injuries of the weather, providing it proper nourishment, and teaching it to help itself; nor to mention her forsaking the nest, if after the usual time of reckoning, the young one does not make its appearance. A chymical operation could not be followed with greater art or diligence, than is seen in the hatching of a chick; though there are many other birds that shew an infinitely greater sagacity in all the forementioned particulars.

But at the same time the hen, that has all this seeming ingenuity (which is indeed absolutely necessary for the propagation of the species) considered in other respects, is without the least glimmerings of thought or common sense. She mistakes a piece of chalk for an egg, and sits upon it in the same manner: she is insensible of any increase or diminution in the number of those she lays: she does not distinguish between her own and those of another species; and when the birth appears of never so different a bird, will cherish it for her own. In all these circumstances, which do not carry an immediate regard to the subsistence of herself or her species, she is a very idiot.

There is not, in my opinion, any thing more mysterious in nature, than this instinct in animals, which thus rises above reason, and falls infinitely short of it. It cannot be accounted for by any properties in matter, and at the same time works after so odd a manner, that one cannot think it the faculty of an intellectual being. For my own part, I look upon it as upon the principle of gravitation in bodies, which is not to be explained by any known qualities inherent in the bodies themselves, nor from any laws of mechanism, but, according to the best notions of the greatest philosophers, is an immediate impression from the first Mover, and the divine energy acting in the creatures.

Speator.

§ 26. *The Necessity of forming religious Principles at an early Age.*

As soon as you are capable of reflection, you must perceive that there is a right and wrong in human actions. You see that those who are born with the same advantages of fortune, are not all equally prosperous in the course of life. While some of them, by wise and steady conduct, attain distinction in the world, and pass their days with comfort and honour; others of the same rank, by mean and vicious behaviour, forfeit the advantages of their birth, involve themselves in much misery, and end in be-

ing

ing a disgrace to their friends, and a burden on society. Early, then, you may learn that it is not on the external condition in which you find yourselves placed, but on the part which you are to act, that your welfare or unhappiness, your honour or infamy, depend. Now, when beginning to act that part, what can be of greater moment, than to regulate your plan of conduct with the most serious attention, before you have yet committed any fatal or irretrievable errors? If, instead of exerting reflection for this valuable purpose, you deliver yourselves up, at so critical a time, to sloth and pleasure; if you refuse to listen to any counsellor but humour, or to attend to any pursuit except that of amusement; if you allow yourselves to float loose and careless on the tide of life, ready to receive any direction which the current of fashion may chance to give you; what can you expect to follow from such beginnings? While so many around you are undergoing the sad consequences of a like indiscretion, for what reason shall not these consequences extend to you? Shall you only attain success without that preparation, and escape dangers without that precaution, which is required of others? Shall happiness grow up to you of its own accord, and solicit your acceptance, when, to the rest of mankind, it is the fruit of long cultivation, and the acquisition of labour and care?—Deceive not yourselves with such arrogant hopes. Whatever be your rank, Providence will not, for your sake, reverse its established order. By listening to wise admonitions, and tempering the vivacity of youth with a proper mixture of serious thought, you may ensure cheerfulness for the rest of your life; but by delivering yourselves up at present to giddiness and levity, you lay the foundation of lasting heaviness of heart.

Blair.

§ 27. *The Acquisition of virtuous Dispositions and Habits a necessary Part of Education.*

When you look forward to those plans of life, which either your circumstances have suggested, or your friends have proposed, you will not hesitate to acknowledge, that in order to pursue them with advantage, some previous discipline is requisite. Be assured, that whatever is to be your profession, no education is more necessary to your success, than the acquirement of virtuous dispositions and habits. This is the universal preparation for every charac-

ter, and every station in life. Bad as the world is, respect is always paid to virtue. In the usual course of human affairs it will be found, that a plain understanding, joined with acknowledged worth, contributes more to prosperity, than the brightest parts without probity or honour. Whether science, or business, or public life, be your aim, virtue still enters, for a principal share, into all those great departments of society. It is connected with eminence, in every liberal art; with reputation, in every branch of fair and useful business; with distinction, in every public station. The vigour which it gives the mind, and the weight which it adds to character; the generous sentiments which it breathes; the undaunted spirit which it inspires, the ardour of diligence which it quickens, the freedom which it procures from pernicious and dishonourable avocations, are the foundations of all that is high in fame or great in success among men. Whatever ornamental or engaging endowments you now possess, virtue is a necessary requisite, in order to their shining with proper lustre. Feeble are the attractions of the fairest form, if it be suspected that nothing, within corresponds to the pleasing appearance without. Short are the triumphs of wit, when it is supposed to be the vehicle of malice. By whatever arts you may at first attract the attention, you can hold the esteem and secure the hearts of others only by amiable dispositions and the accomplishments of the mind. These are the qualities whose influence will last, when the lustre of all that once sparkled and dazzled has passed away.

Ibid.

§ 28. *The Happiness and Dignity of Mankind depend upon the Conduct of the youthful Age.*

Let not the season of youth be barren of improvements, so essential to your felicity and honour. Your character is now of your own forming; your fate is in some measure put into your own hands. Your nature is as yet pliant and soft. Habits have not established their dominion. Prejudices have not pre-occupied your understanding. The world has not had time to contract and debase your affections. All your powers are more vigorous, disengaged and free, than they will be at any future period. Whatever impulse you now give to your desires and passions, the direction is likely to continue. It will form the channel in which your life is to run;

run; nay, it may determine an everlasting issue. Consider then the employment of this important period as the highest trust which shall ever be committed to you; as, in a great measure, decisive of your happiness, in time and in eternity. As in the succession of the seasons, each, by the invariable laws of nature, affects the productions of what is next in course; so, in human life, every period of our age, according as it is well or ill spent, influences the happiness of that which is to follow. Virtuous youth gradually brings forward accomplished and flourishing manhood; and such manhood passes of itself, without uneasiness, into respectable and tranquil old age. But when nature is turned out of its regular course, disorder takes place in the moral, just as in the vegetable world. If the spring put forth no blossoms, in summer there will be no beauty, and in autumn no fruit: So, if youth be trifled away without improvement, manhood will be contemptible, and old age miserable. *Blair.*

§ 29. *Piety to God the Foundation of good Morals.*

What I shall first recommend is piety to God. With this I begin, both as the foundation of good morals, and as a disposition particularly graceful and becoming in youth. To be void of it, argues a cold heart, destitute of some of the best affections which belong to that age. Youth is the season of warm and generous emotions. The heart should then spontaneously rise into the admiration of what is great; glow with the love of what is fair and excellent; and melt at the discovery of tenderness and goodness. Where can any object be found, so proper to kindle those affections, as the Father of the universe, and the Author of all felicity! Unmoved by veneration, can you contemplate that grandeur and majesty which his works every where display? Untroubled by gratitude, can you view that profusion of good, which, in this pleasing season of life, his beneficent hand pours around you? Happy in the love and affection of those with whom you are connected, look up to the Supreme Being, as the inspirer of all the friendship which has ever been shewn you by others; himself your best and your first friend; formerly, the supporter of your infancy, and the guide of your childhood: now, the guardian of your youth, and the hope of your coming years. View religious homage as a natural expression of gratitude to him for all

his goodness. Consider it as the service of the God of your fathers; of him to whom your parents devoted you; of him whom in former ages your ancestors honoured; and by whom they are now rewarded and blessed in heaven. Connected with so many tender sensibilities of soul, let religion be with you, not the cold and barren offspring of speculation, but the warm and vigorous dictate of the heart. *Ibid.*

§ 30. *Religion never to be treated with Levity.*

Impress your minds with reverence for all that is sacred. Let no wantonness of youthful spirits, no compliance with the intemperate mirth of others, ever betray you into profane sallies. Besides the guilt which is thereby incurred, nothing gives a more odious appearance of petulance and presumption to youth, than the affectation of treating religion with levity. Instead of being an evidence of superior understanding, it discovers a pert and shallow mind; which, vain of the first smatterings of knowledge, presumes to make light of what the rest of mankind revere. At the same time, you are not to imagine, that when exhorted to be religious, you are called upon to become more formal and solemn in your manners than others of the same years; or to erect yourselves into supercilious reprovers of those around you. The spirit of true religion breathes gentleness and affability. It gives a native unaffected ease to the behaviour. It is social, kind, and cheerful; far removed from that gloomy and illiberal superstition which clouds the brow, sharpens the temper, dejects the spirit, and teaches men to fit themselves for another world, by neglecting the concerns of this. Let your religion, on the contrary, connect preparation for heaven with an honourable discharge of the duties of active life. Of such religion discover, on every proper occasion, that you are not ashamed; but avoid making any unnecessary ostentation of it before the world. *Ibid.*

§ 31. *Modesty and Docility to be joined to Piety.*

To piety join modesty and docility, reverence of your parents, and submission to those who are your superiors in knowledge, in station, and in years. Dependence and obedience belong to youth. Modesty is one of its chief ornaments; and has ever been esteemed a preface of rising merit. When entering on the career of life,

life, it is your part, not to assume the reins as yet into your hands; but to commit yourselves to the guidance of the more experienced, and to become wise by the wisdom of those who have gone before you. Of all the follies incident to youth, there are none which either deform its present appearance, or blast the prospect of its future prosperity, more than self conceit, presumption, and obstinacy. By checking its natural progress in improvement, they fix it in long immaturity: and frequently produce mischiefs which can never be repaired. Yet these are vices too commonly found among the young. Big with enterprise, and elated by hope, they resolve to trust for success to none but themselves. Full of their own abilities, they deride the admonitions which are given them by their friends, as the timorous suggestions of age. Too wise to learn, too impatient to deliberate, too forward to be restrained, they plunge, with precipitant indiscretion, into the midst of all the dangers with which life abounds.

Blair.

§ 32. *Sincerity and Truth recommended.*

It is necessary to recommend to you sincerity and truth. This is the basis of every virtue. That darkness of character, where we can see no heart; those foldings of art, through which no native affection is allowed to penetrate, present an object, unamiable in every season of life, but particularly odious in youth. If, at an age when the heart is warm, when the emotions are strong, and when nature is expected to shew herself free and open, you can already smile and deceive, what are we to look for, when you shall be longer hackneyed in the ways of men; when interest shall have completed the obduration of your heart, and experience shall have improved you in all the arts of guile? Dissimulation in youth is the forerunner of perfidy in old age. Its first appearance is the fatal omen of growing depravity and future shame. It degrades parts and learning; obscures the lustre of every accomplishment; and sinks you into contempt with God and man. As you value, therefore, the approbation of Heaven, or the esteem of the world, cultivate the love of truth. In all your proceedings, be direct and consistent. Ingenuity and candour possess the most powerful charm; they bespeak universal favour, and carry an apology for almost every failing. The path of truth is a plain and safe path; that of falsehood is a perplexing

maze. After the first departure from sincerity, it is not in your power to stop. One artifice unavoidably leads on to another; till, as the intricacy of the labyrinth increases, you are left entangled in your own snare. Deceit discovers a little mind, which stops at temporary expedients, without rising to comprehensive views of conduct. It betrays, at the same time, a dastardly spirit. It is the resource of one who wants courage to avow his designs, or to rest upon himself. Whereas, openness of character displays that generous boldness, which ought to distinguish youth. To set out in the world with no other principle than a crafty attention to interest, betokens one who is destined for creeping through the inferior walks of life: but to give an early preference to honour above gain, when they stand in competition; to despise every advantage, which cannot be attained without dishonest arts; to brook no meanness, and to stoop to no dissimulation; are the indications of a great mind, the presages of future eminence and distinction in life. At the same time this virtuous sincerity is perfectly consistent with the most prudent vigilance and caution. It is opposed to cunning, not to true wisdom. It is not the simplicity of a weak and improvident, but the candour of an enlarged and noble mind; of one who scorns deceit, because he accounts it both base and unprofitable; and who seeks no disguise, because he needs none to hide him.

Ibid.

§ 33. *Benevolence and Humanity.*

Youth is the proper season of cultivating the benevolent and humane affections. As a great part of your happiness is to depend on the connections which you form with others, it is of high importance that you acquire betimes the temper and the manners which will render such connections comfortable. Let a sense of justice be the foundation of all your social qualities. In your most early intercourse with the world, and even in your youthful amusements, let no unfairness be found. Engrave on your mind that sacred rule, of 'doing in all things to others, according as you wish that they should do unto you.' For this end, impress yourselves with a deep sense of the original and natural equality of men. Whatever advantages of birth or fortune you possess, never display them with an ostentatious superiority. Leave the subordinations of rank to regulate the intercourse of more advanced years. At present

present it becomes you to act among your companions, as man with man. Remember how unknown to you are the vicissitudes of the world; and how often they, on whom ignorant and contemptuous young men once looked down with scorn, have risen to be their superiors in future years. Compassion is an emotion of which you never ought to be ashamed. Graceful in youth is the tear of sympathy, and the heart that melts at the tale of woe. Let not ease and indulgence contract your affections, and wrap you up in selfish enjoyment. Accustom yourselves to think of the distresses of human life; of the solitary cottage, the dying parent, and the weeping orphan. Never sport with pain and distress, in any of your amusements; nor treat even the meanest insect with wanton cruelty.

Blair.

§ 34. *Courtesy and engaging Manners.*

In order to render yourselves amiable in society, correct every appearance of harshness in behaviour. Let that courtesy distinguish your demeanour, which springs not so much from studied politeness, as from a mild and gentle heart. Follow the customs of the world in matters indifferent; but stop when they become sinful. Let your manners be simple and natural; and of course they will be engaging. Affectation is certain deformity. By forming yourselves on fantastic models, and vying with one another in every reigning folly, the young begin with being ridiculous, and end in being vicious and immoral.

Ibid.

§ 35. *Temperance in Pleasure recommended.*

Let me particularly exhort youth to temperance in pleasure. Let me admonish them, to beware of that rock on which thousands, from race to race, continue to split. The love of pleasure, natural to man in every period of his life, glows at this age with excessive ardour. Novelty adds fresh charms, as yet, to every gratification. The world appears to spread a continual feast; and health, vigour, and high spirits, invite them to partake of it without restraint. In vain we warn them of latent dangers. Religion is accused of insufferable severity, in prohibiting enjoyment; and the old, when they offer their admonition, are upbraided with having forgot that they once were young.—And yet, my friends, to what do the constraints of religion, and the counsels of age, with

respect to pleasure, amount? They may all be comprised in a few words—not to hurt yourselves, and not to hurt others, by your pursuit of pleasure. Within these bounds, pleasure is lawful; beyond them it becomes criminal, because it is ruinous. Are these restraints any other than what a wise man would choose to impose on himself? We call you not to renounce pleasure, but to enjoy it in safety. Instead of abridging it, we exhort you to pursue it on an extensive plan. We propose measures for securing its possession, and for prolonging its duration.

Ibid.

§ 36. *Whatever violates Nature, cannot afford true Pleasure.*

Consult your whole nature. Consider yourselves not only as sensitive, but as rational beings; not only as rational, but social; not only as social, but immortal. Whatever violates your nature in any of these respects, cannot afford true pleasure; any more than that which undermines an essential part of the vital system, can promote health. For the truth of this conclusion, we appeal not merely to the authority of religion, nor to the testimony of the aged, but to yourselves, and your own experience. We ask, whether you have not found, that in a course of criminal excess, your pleasure was more than compensated by succeeding pain? Whether, if not from every particular instance, yet from every habit, at least, of unlawful gratification, there did not spring some thorn to wound you; there did not arise some consequence to make you repent of it in the issue? How long will you repeat the same round of pernicious folly, and tamely expose yourselves to be caught in the same snare? If you have any consideration, or any firmness left, avoid temptations, for which you have found yourselves unequal, with as much care as you would shun pestilential infection. Break off all connections with the loose and profligate.

Ibid.

§ 37. *Irregular Pleasures.*

By the unhappy excesses of irregular pleasures in youth, how many amiable dispositions are corrupted or destroyed! How many rising capacities and powers are suppressed! How many flattering hopes of parents and friends are totally extinguished! Who but must drop a tear over human nature, when he beholds that morning, which arose so bright, overcast with

with such untimely darkness; that good-humour, which once captivated all hearts, that vivacity which sparkled in every company, those abilities which were fitted for adorning the highest stations, all sacrificed at the shrine of low sensuality; and one who was formed for running the fair career of life in the midst of public esteem, cut off by his vices at the beginning of his course; or sunk for the whole of it into insignificance and contempt!—These, O sinful Pleasure, are thy trophies! It is thus that, co-operating with the foe of God and man, thou degrades human honour, and blatest the opening prospects of human felicity!

Blair.

§ 38. *Industry and Application.*

Diligence, industry, and proper improvement of time, are material duties of the young. To no purpose are they endowed with the best abilities, if they want activity for exerting them. Unavailing, in this case, will be every direction that can be given them, either for their temporal or spiritual welfare. In youth, the habits of industry are most easily acquired: in youth the incentives to it are strongest, from ambition and from duty, from emulation and hope, from all the prospects which the beginning of life affords. If, dead to these calls, you already languish in slothful inaction, what will be able to quicken the more sluggish current of advancing years? Industry is not only the instrument of improvement, but the foundation of pleasure. Nothing is so opposite to the true enjoyment of life, as the relaxed and feeble state of an indolent mind. He who is a stranger to industry, may possess, but he cannot enjoy. For it is labour only which gives the relish to pleasure. It is the appointed vehicle of every good man. It is the indispensable condition of our possessing a sound mind in a sound body. Sloth is so inconsistent with both, that it is hard to determine, whether it be a greater foe to virtue, or to health and happiness. Inactive as it is in itself, its effects are fatally powerful. Though it appear a slowly-flowing stream, yet it undermines all that is stable and flourishing. It not only saps the foundation of every virtue, but pours upon you a deluge of crimes and evils. It is like water which first putrefies by stagnation, and then sends up noxious vapours, and fills the atmosphere with death. Fly, therefore, from idleness, as the certain parent both of guilt and of

ruin. And under idleness I include, not mere inaction only, but all that circle of trifling occupations, in which too many saunter away their youth; perpetually engaged in frivolous society, or public amusements; in the labours of dress, or the ostentation of their persons.—Is this the foundation which you lay for future usefulness and esteem? By such accomplishments do you hope to recommend yourselves to the thinking part of the world, and to answer the expectations of your friends and your country?—Amusements youth requires: it were vain, it were cruel, to prohibit them. But, though allowable as the relaxation, they are most culpable as the business, of the young. For they then become the gulph of time, and the poison of the mind. They foment bad passions. They weaken the manly powers. They sink the native vigour of youth into contemptible effeminacy.

Ibid.

§ 39. *The Employment of Time.*

Redeeming your time from such dangerous waste, seek to fill it with employments which you may review with satisfaction. The acquisition of knowledge is one of the most honourable occupations of youth. The desire of it discovers a liberal mind, and is connected with many accomplishments and many virtues. But though your train of life should not lead you to study, the course of education always furnishes proper employments to a well disposed mind. Whatever you pursue, be emulous to excel. Generous ambition, and sensibility to praise, are, especially at your age, among the marks of virtue. Think not, that any affluence of fortune, or any elevation of rank, exempts you from the duties of application and industry. Industry is the law of our being; it is the demand of nature, of reason, and of God. Remember always, that the years which now pass over your heads, leave permanent memorials behind them. From your thoughtless minds they may escape; but they remain in the remembrance of God. They form an important part of the register of your life. They will hereafter bear testimony, either for or against you at that day when, for all your actions, but particularly for the employments of youth, you must give an account to God. Whether your future course is destined to be long or short, after this manner it should commence; and, if it continue to be thus conducted,

deducted, its conclusion, at what time soever it arrives, will not be inglorious or unhappy. Blair.

§ 40. *The Necessity of depending for Success on the Blessing of Heaven.*

Let me finish the subject, with recalling your attention to that dependance on the blessing of Heaven, which, amidst all your endeavours after improvement, you ought continually to preserve. It is too common with the young, even when they resolve to tread the path of virtue and honour, to set out with presumptuous confidence in themselves. Trusting to their own abilities for carrying them successfully through life, they are careless of applying to God, or of deriving any assistance from what they are apt to reckon the gloomy discipline of religion. Alas! how little do they know the dangers which await them! Neither human wisdom, nor human virtue, unsupported by religion, are equal for the trying situations which often occur in life. By the shock of temptation, how frequently have the most virtuous intentions been overthrown! Under the pressure of disaster, how often has the greatest constancy sunk! Destitute of the favour of God, you are in no better situation, with all your boasted abilities, than orphans left to wander in a trackless desert, without any guide to conduct them, or any shelter to cover them from the gathering storm. Correct, then, this ill-sounded arrogance. Expect not that your happiness can be independent of him who made you. By faith and repentance, apply to the Redeemer of the world. By piety and prayer, seek the protection of the God of Heaven. *Ibid.*

§ 41. *The Necessity of an early and close Application to Wisdom.*

It is necessary to habituate our minds, in our younger years, to some employment which may engage our thoughts, and fill the capacity of the soul at a riper age. For, however we may roam in youth from folly to folly, too volatile for rest, too soft and effeminate for industry, even ambitious to make a splendid figure; yet the time will come when we shall outgrow the relish of childish amusements: and, if we are not provided with a taste for manly satisfactions, to succeed in their room, we must of course become miserable, at an age more difficult to be pleased. While men, however unthinking and unemployed, enjoy an inexhaustible flow of vigorous spi-

rits; a constant succession of gay ideas, which flatter and sport in the brain, makes them pleased with themselves, and with every frolic as trifling as themselves: but when the ferment of their blood abates, and the freshness of their youth, like the morning dew, passes away, their spirits flag for want of entertainments more satisfactory in themselves, and more suited to a manly age; and the soul, from a sprightly impertinence, from quick sensations, and florid desires, subsides into a dead calm, and sinks into a flat stupidity. The fire of a glowing imagination (the property of youth) may make folly look pleasing, and lend a beauty to objects, which have none inherent in them; just as the sun beams may paint a cloud, and diversify it with beautiful stains of light, however dark, unsubstantial, and empty in itself. But nothing can shine with undiminished lustre, but religion and knowledge, which are essentially and intrinsically bright. Take it therefore for granted, which you will find by experience, that nothing can be long entertaining, but what is in some measure beneficial; because nothing else will bear a calm and sedate review.

You may be fancied for a while, upon the account of good-nature, the inseparable attendant upon a flush of sanguine health, and a fulness of youthful spirits: but you will find, in process of time, that among the wise and good, useless good-nature is the object of pity, ill-nature of hatred; but nature beautified and improved by an assemblage of moral and intellectual endowments, is the only object of a solid and lasting esteem. *See d.*

§ 42. *The Unhappiness consequent on the Neglect of early improving the Mind.*

There is not a greater inlet to misery and vices of all kinds, than the not knowing how to pass our vacant hours. For what remains to be done, when the first part of their lives, who are not brought up to any manual employment, is slipped away without an acquired relish for reading, or taste for other rational satisfactions? That they should pursue their pleasures?—But, religion apart, common prudence will warn them to tie up the wheel as they begin to go down the hill of life. Shall they then apply themselves to their studies? Alas! the seed-time is already past: The enterprising and spirited ardour of youth being over, without having been applied to those valuable purposes for which it was given, all

all ambition of excelling upon generous and laudable schemes quite stagnates. If they have not some poor expedient to deceive the time, or, to speak more properly, to deceive themselves, the length of a day will seem tedious to them, who, perhaps, have the unreasonableness to complain of the shortness of life in general. When the former part of our life has been nothing but vanity, the latter end of it can be nothing but vexation. In short, we must be miserable, without some employment to fix, or some amusement to dissipate our thoughts: the latter we cannot command in all places, nor relish at all times; and therefore there is an absolute necessity for the former. We may pursue this or that new pleasure; we may be fond for a while of a new acquisition; but when the graces of novelty are worn off, and the briskness of our first desire is over, the transition is very quick and sudden, from an eager fondness to a cool indifference. Hence there is a restless agitation in our minds, still craving something new, still unsatisfied with it, when possessed; till melancholy increases, as we advance in years, like shadows lengthening towards the close of day.

Hence it is, that men of this stamp are continually complaining that the times are altered for the worse: Because the sprightliness of their youth represented every thing in the most engaging light; and when men are in high good humour with themselves, they are apt to be so with all around; the face of nature brightens up, and the sun shines with a more agreeable lustre: but when old age has cut them off from the enjoyment of false pleasures, and habitual vice has given them a distaste for the only true and lasting delights; when a retrospect of their past lives presents nothing to view but one wide tract of uncultivated ground; a soul distempered with spleen, remorse, and an insensibility of each rational satisfaction, darkens and discolours every object; and the change is not in the times, but in them, who have been forsaken by those gratifications which they would not forsake.

How much otherwise is it with those who have laid up an inexhaustible fund of knowledge! When a man has been laying out that time in the pursuit of some great and important truth, which others waste in a circle of gay follies, he is conscious of having acted up to the dignity of his nature; and from that consciousness there re-

sults that serene complacency, which, though not so violent, is much preferable to the pleasures of the animal life. He can travel on from strength to strength; for, in literature as in war, each new conquest which he gains, impowers him to push his conquests still farther, and to enlarge the empire of reason: thus he is ever in a progressive state, still making new acquisitions, still animated with hopes of future discoveries.

See.

§ 43. *Great Talents not requisite for the common Duties of Life.*

Some may alledge, in bar to what I have said, as an excuse for their indolence, the want of proper talents to make any progress in learning. To which I answer, that few stations require uncommon abilities to discharge them well; for the ordinary offices of life, that share of apprehension which falls to the bulk of mankind, provided we improve it, will serve well enough. Bright and sparkling parts are like diamonds, which may adorn the proprietor, but are not necessary for the good of the world; whereas common sense is like current coin; we have every day, in the ordinary occurrences of life, occasion for it: and if we would but call it into action, it would carry us much greater lengths than we seem to be aware of. Men may extol, as much as they please, fine, exalted and superior sense; yet common sense, if attended with humility and industry, is the best guide to beneficial truth, and the best preservative against any fatal errors in knowledge, and notorious misconducts in life. For none are, in the nature of the thing, more liable to error, than those who have a distaste for plain sober sense and dry reasoning; which yet is the case of those whose warm and elevated imagination, whose uncommon fire and vivacity, make them in love with nothing but what is striking, marvellous, and dazzling: for great wits, like great beauties, look upon mere esteem as a flat insipid thing; nothing less than admiration will content them. To gain the good-will of mankind, by being useful to them, is in their opinion, a poor, low, groveling aim; their ambition is, to draw the eyes of the world upon them, by dazzling and surprizing them; a temper which draws them off from the love of truth, and consequently subjects them to gross mistakes: for they will not love truth as such; they will love

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it only when it happens to be surprizing and uncommon, which few important truths are. The love of novelty will be the predominant passion; that of truth will only influence them, when it does not interfere with it. Perhaps nothing sooner misleads men out of the road of truth, than to have the wild, dancing light of a bright imagination playing before them. Perhaps they have too much life and spirit to have patience enough to go to the bottom of a subject, and trace up every argument, through a long tedious process, to its original. Perhaps they have that delicacy of make which fits them for a swift and speedy race, but does not enable them to carry a great weight, or to go through any long journey; whereas men of fewer ideas, who lay them in order, compare and examine them, and go on, step by step, in a gradual chain of thinking, make up by industry and caution what they want in quickness of apprehension. Be not discouraged, if you do not meet with success at first. Observe, (for it lies within the compass of any man's observation) that he who has been long habituated to one kind of knowledge, is utterly at a loss in another, to which he is unaccustomed; till, by repeated efforts, he finds a progressive opening of his faculties; and then he wonders how he could be so long in finding out a connection of ideas, which, to a practised understanding, is very obvious. But by neglecting to use your faculties, you will, in time, lose the very power of using them.

Seed.

§ 44. *Riches or Fortune no Excuse to exempt any from Study.*

Others there are, who plead an exemption from study, because their fortune makes them independent of the world, and they need not be beholden to it for a maintenance—that is, because their situation in life exempts them from the necessity of spending their time in servile offices and hardships, therefore they may dispose of it just as they please. It is to imagine, because God has empowered them to single out the best means of employing their hours, viz in reading, meditation; in the highest instances of piety and charity; therefore they may throw them away in a round of impertinence, vanity, and folly. The apostle's rule, 'that if any man will not work, neither should he eat,' extends to the rich as well as the poor; only supposing, that there are different kinds of

work assigned to each. The reason is the same in both cases, viz. that he who will do no good, ought not to receive or enjoy any. As we are all joint traders and partners in life, he forfeits his right to any share in the common stock of happiness, who does not endeavour to contribute his quota or allotted part to it: the public happiness being nothing but the sum total of each individual's contribution to it. An easy fortune does not set men free from labour and industry in general; it only exempts them from some particular kinds of labour: it is not a blessing, as it gives them liberty to do nothing at all; but as it gives them liberty wisely to chuse, and steadily to prosecute, the most ennobling exercises, and the most improving employments, the pursuit of truth, the practice of virtue, the service of God who giveth them all things richly to enjoy, in short, the doing and being every thing that is commendable; though nothing merely in order to be commended. That time which others must employ in tilling the ground (which often deceives their expectation) with the sweat of their brow, they may lay out in cultivating the mind, a soil always grateful to the care of the tiller.—The sum of what I would say, is this: That, though you are not confined to any particular calling, yet you have a general one; which is, to watch over your heart, and to improve your head; to make yourself master of all those accomplishments—an enlarged compass of thought, that flowing humanity and generosity, which are necessary to become a great fortune; and of all those perfections, viz. moderation, humility, and temperance, which are necessary to bear a small one patiently; but especially it is your duty to acquire a taste for those pleasures, which, after they are tasted, go off agreeably, and leave behind them a grateful and delightful flavour on the mind.

Ibid.

§ 45. *The Pleasures resulting from a prudent Use of our Faculties.*

Happy that man, who, unembarrassed by vulgar cares, master of himself, his time, and fortune, spends his time in making himself wiser, and his fortune in making others (and therefore himself) happier: who, as the will and understanding are the two ennobling faculties of the soul, thinks himself not complete, till his understanding be beautified with the valuable furniture of knowledge, as well as his will enriched

riched with every virtue; who has furnished himself with all the advantages to relish solitude, and enliven conversation; when serious, not sullen; and when cheerful, not indiscreetly gay; his ambition, not to be admired for a false glare of greatness, but to be beloved for the gentle and sober lustre of his wisdom and goodness. The greatest minister of state has not more business to do in a public capacity, than he, and indeed every man else may find in the retired and still scenes of life. Even in his private walks, every thing that is visible convinceth him there is present a Being invisible. Aided by natural philosophy, he reads plain legible traces of the Divinity in every thing he meets: he sees the Deity in every tree, as well as Moses did in the burning bush, though not in so glaring a manner: and when he sees him, he adores him with the tribute of a grateful heart.

Seed.

§ 46. *The justly valuing and duly using the Advantages enjoyed in a Place of Education.*

One considerable advantage is, that regular method of study, too much neglected in other places, which obtains here. Nothing is more common elsewhere, than for persons to plunge, at once, into the very depth of science, (far beyond their own) without having learned the first rudiments: nothing more common, than for some to pass themselves upon the world for great scholars, by the help of universal Dictionaries, Abridgements, and Indexes; by which means they gain an useless smattering in every branch of literature, just enough to enable them to talk fluently, or rather impertinently, upon most subjects; but not to think justly and deeply upon any: like those who have a general superficial acquaintance with almost every body. To cultivate an intimate and entire friendship with one or two worthy persons, would be of more service to them. The true genuine way to make a substantial scholar, is what takes place here,—to begin with those general principles of reasoning, upon which all science depends, and which give a light to every part of literature, to make gradual advances, a slow but sure process; to travel gently, with proper guides to direct us, through the most beautiful and fruitful regions of knowledge in general, before we fix ourselves in, and confine ourselves to any particular province of it; it being the great secret of education, not to

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make a man a complete master of any branch of science, but to give his mind that freedom, openness, and extent, which shall empower him to master it, or indeed any other, whenever he shall turn the bent of his studies that way; which is best done, by setting before him, in his earlier years, a general view of the whole intellectual world: whereas, an early and entire attachment to one particular calling, narrows the abilities of the mind to that degree, that he can scarce think out of that track to which he is accustomed.

The next advantage I shall mention is, a direction in the choice of authors upon the most material subjects. For it is perhaps a great truth, that learning might be reduced to a much narrower compass, if one were to read none but original authors, those who write chiefly from their own fund of sense, without treading servilely in the steps of others.

Here, too, a generous emulation quickens our endeavours, and the friend improves the scholar. The tediousness of the way to truth is insensibly beguiled by having fellow-travellers, who keep an even pace with us: each light dispenses a brighter flame, by mixing its social rays with those of others. Here we live sequestered from noise and hurry, far from the great scene of business, vanity, and idleness; our hours are all our own. Here it is, as in the Athenian torch-race, where a series of men have successively transmitted from one to another the torch of knowledge; and no sooner has once quitted it, but another equally able takes the lamp, to dispense light to all within its sphere. *Ibid.*

§ 47. *Discipline of the Place of Education not to be relaxed.*

May none of us complain, that the discipline of the place is too strict: may we rather reflect, that there needs nothing else to make a man completely miserable, but to let him, in the most dangerous stage of life, carve out an happiness for himself, without any check upon the sallies of youth! Those to whom you have been over indulgent, and perhaps could not have been otherwise, without proceeding to extremities, never to be used but in desperate cases, those have been always the most liberal of their censures and invectives against you: they put one in mind of Adonijah's rebellion against David his father;

* —Quasi cutores, vicia lampada tradunt.

Lucanus.

because

because his father had not displeased him at any time, in saying, Why hast thou done so?—It is a certain sign men want restraints, when they are impatient under any; too headstrong to be governed by authority, too weak to be conducted by reason.

Seed.

§ 48. *Irregularities of a Few bring Censure on the Whole.*

It were to be wished, that they who claim greater indulgences, would seriously reflect, that the glaring irregularities of two or three members bring an undistinguishing censure upon a whole body; make a noise in, and alarm the world, as if all flesh had here corrupted their ways: whereas the sober, modest worth of a much greater number, who here in private attend the duties of the wise and good, must, in the nature of the thing, escape the notice of the world. Notorious disorders, how few soever are concerned, strike upon the senses of some, and affect the passions of many more; by which (their senses and passions) the gross of mankind generally judge of things; but it requires some expanse of reflection, to which the bulk of mankind will never put themselves to consider, that great numbers must have spent their time profitably, formed habits of just thinking here, and laid in that stock of knowledge which they have produced into view in a more public sphere; that those vices, which they complain of, may not be the native growth of the place, but imported from irregular and undisciplined families, from schools, and from the worst of schools, the world at large, when youth are entered into it too soon. *Ibid.*

§ 49. *Diffidence of one's Abilities, an Indication of good Sense.*

Consider, that it is a sure indication of good sense to be diffident of it. We then, and not till then, are growing wise, when we begin to discern how weak and unwise we are. An absolute perfection of understanding is impossible; he makes the nearest approaches to it, who has the sense to discern, and the humility to acknowledge, its imperfections. Modesty always sits gracefully upon youth; it covers a multitude of faults, and doubles the lustre of every virtue which it seems to hide: the perfections of men being like those flowers which appear more beautiful when their leaves are a little contracted and folded up, than when they are full blown, and

display themselves, without any reserve, to the view.

We are some of us very fond of knowledge, and apt to value ourselves upon any proficiency in the sciences; one science, however, there is, worth more than all the rest, and that is, the science of living well; which shall remain, when, 'Whether there be tongues, they shall cease; Whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.' As to new notions, and new doctrines, of which this age is very fruitful, the time will come, when we shall have no pleasure in them: nay, the time shall come, when they shall be exploded, and would have been forgotten, if they had not been preserved in those excellent books, which contain a confutation of them: like insects preserved for ages in amber, which otherwise would soon have returned to the common mass of things. But a firm belief of Christianity, and a practice suitable to it, will support and invigorate the mind to the last, and most of all at last, at that important hour, which must decide our hopes and apprehensions: and the wisdom, which, like our Saviour, cometh from above, will, through his merits, bring us thither. And indeed, all our other studies and pursuits, however different, ought to be subservient to, and center in this grand point, the pursuit of eternal happiness, by being good in ourselves, and useful to the world. *Ibid.*

§ 50. *The Necessity of peculiar Temperance in Places of Education.*

From a thorough insight into human nature, with a watchful eye, and kind attention to the vanity and intemperate heat of youth, with well-weighed measures for the advancement of all useful literature, and the continual support and increase of virtue and piety, have the wise and religious institutors of the rules of conduct and government in places of education, done all that human prudence could do, to promote the most excellent and beneficial design, by the most rational and well-concerted means. They first laid the foundation well, in the discipline and regulation of the appetites. They put them under the restraint of wholesome and frugal rules, to place them out of the reach of intemperance, and to preclude an excess that would serve only to corrupt, inflame, and torment them. They are fed with food convenient for them; with simplicity yet sufficiency; with a kind though cautious hand. By this means, the seeds of vice are stifled in their birth; young persons

persons are here removed from temptations, to which others, from a less happy situation, are too frequently exposed; and by an early habit of temperance and self-command, they may learn either to prevent all irregular solicitations, or with ease to controul them. Happy are they who, by a thankful enjoyment of these advantages, and a willing compliance with these rules, lay up in store for the rest of their life, virtue, health, and peace! Vain, indeed, would be the expectation of any real progress in intellectual and moral improvements, were not the foundation thus laid in strict regularity and temperance; were the sensual appetites to be pampered in youth, or even vitiated with that degree of indulgence which an extravagant world may allow and call elegance, but in a place of education would be downright luxury. The taste of sensual pleasures must be checked and abated in them, that they may acquire a relish of the more sublime pleasures that result from reason and religion; that they may pursue them with effect, and enjoy them without avocation. And have they not in this place every motive, assistance, and encouragement, to engage them in a virtuous and moral life, and to animate them in the attainment of useful learning? What rank or condition of youth is there, that has not daily and hourly opportunities of laying in supplies of knowledge and virtue, that will in every station of life be equally serviceable and ornamental to themselves, and beneficial to mankind? And shall any one dare to convert a house of discipline and learning into a house of dissoluteness, extravagance, and riot? With what an aggravation of guilt do they load themselves, who at the same time that they are pursuing their own unhappiness, sacrilegiously break through all the fences of good order and government, and by their practice, seducement, and example, do what in them lies, to introduce into these schools of frugality, sobriety, and temperance, all the mad vices and vain gaieties of a licentious and voluptuous age! What have they to answer for, who, while they prodigately squander away that most precious part of time, which is the only season of application and improvement, to their own irretrievable loss, encourage one another in an idle and sensual course of life, and by spreading wide the contagion, reflect a scandal upon, and strive to bring into public disesteem, the place of their edu-

cation, where industry, literature, virtue, decency, and whatever else is praise-worthy, did for ages flourish and abound? Is this the genuine fruit of the pious care of our ancestors, for the security and propagation of religion and good-manners, to the latest posterity? Is this at last the reward of their munificence? Or does this conduct correspond with their views, or with the just expectations and demands of your friends and your country?

Tottis.

§ 51. *Valuable Opportunities once lost cannot be recalled.*

Nor let any one vainly imagine, that the time and valuable opportunities which are now lost, can hereafter be recalled at will; or that he who has run out his youthful days in dissipation and pleasure, will have it in his power to stop when he pleases, and make a wiser use of his riper years. Yet this is too generally the fallacious hope that flatters the youth in his sensual indulgences, and leads him insensibly on in the treacherous ways of vice, till it is now too late to return. There are few, who at one plunge so totally immerse in pleasures, as to drown at once all power of reason and conscience: they promise themselves, that they can indulge their appetites to such a point only, and can check and turn them back when they have run their allotted race. I do not indeed say, that there never have been persons in whom the strong ferment of youthful lusts may have happily subsided, and who may have brought forth fruits of amendment, and displayed many eminent virtues. God forbid! that even the most licentious vices of youth should be absolutely incorrigible. But I may venture to affirm, that the instances in this case have been so rare, that it is very dangerous for any one to trust to the experiment; upon a presumption that he shall add to the number. The only sure way to make any proficiency in a virtuous life, is to set out in it betimes. It is then, when our inclinations are trained up in the way that they should lead us, that custom soon makes the best habits the most agreeable; the ways of wisdom become the ways of pleasantness, and every step we advance, they grow more easy and more delightful. But, on the contrary, when vicious, headstrong appetites are to be reclaimed, and inveterate habits to be corrected, what security can we give ourselves, that we shall have either

either inclination, resolution, or power, to stop and turn back, and recover the right way from which we have so long and so widely wandered, and enter upon a new life, when perhaps our strength now faileth us, and we know not how near we may be to our journey's end? These reflections I have suggested principally for the sake of those, who allowing themselves in greater indulgences than are consistent with a liberal and virtuous education, give evident proofs that they are not sufficiently aware of the dangerous encroachments, and the peculiar deceitfulness of pleasurable sin. Happy for them, would they once seriously consider their ways! and no time can be more proper, than when these solemn seasons of recollection and religious discipline should particularly dispose them to seriousness and thought. They would then discover, that though they are awhile carried gently and supinely down the smooth stream of pleasure, yet soon the torrent will grow too violent to be stemmed; the waves will arise, and dash them upon rocks, or sink them in whirlpools. It is therefore the part of prudence to stop short while they may, and to divert their course into a different channel; which, whatever obstructions and difficulties they may labour with at first, will every day become more practicable and pleasing, and will assuredly carry them to a serene and secure haven.

Tottie.

§ 52. *The Beginnings of Evil to be resisted.*

Think not, as I am afraid too many do, that because your passions have not hurried you into atrocious deeds, they have therefore wrought no mischief, and have left no sting behind them. By a continued series of loose, though apparently trivial gratifications, the heart is often as thoroughly corrupted, as by the commission of any one of those enormous crimes which spring from great ambition, or great revenge. Habit gives the passions strength, while the absence of glaring guilt seemingly justifies them; and, unawakened by remorse, the sinner proceeds in his course, till he wax bold in guilt, and become ripe for ruin: for, by gradual and latent steps, the destruction of our virtues advances. Did the evil unveil itself at the beginning; did the storm which is to overthrow our peace, discover, as it rose, all its horrors, precautions would more frequently be taken against it. But we are imperceptibly betrayed; and from one

licentious attachment, one criminal passion, are, by a train of consequences, drawn on to another, till the government of our minds is irrecoverably lost. The enticing and the odious passions are, in this respect, similar in their process; and, though by different roads, conduct at last to the same issue.

Blair.

§ 53. *Order to be observed in Amusements.*

Observe order in your amusements; that is, allow them no more than their proper place; study to keep them within due bounds; mingle them in a temperate succession with serious duties, and the higher business of life. Human life cannot proceed, to advantage, without some measure of relaxation and entertainment. We require relief from care. We are not formed for a perpetual stretch of serious thought. By too intense and continued application, our feeble powers would soon be worn out. At the same time, from our propensity to ease and pleasure, amusement proves, among all ranks of men, the most dangerous foe to order: for it tends incessantly to usurp and encroach, to widen its territories, to thrust itself into the place of more important concerns, and thereby to disturb and counteract the natural course of things. One frivolous amusement indulged out of season, will often carry perplexity and confusion thro' a long succession of affairs.

Amusements, therefore, though they be of an innocent kind, require steady government, to keep them within a due and limited province. But such as are of an irregular and vicious nature, require not to be governed, but to be banished from every orderly society. As soon as a man seeks his happiness from the gaming-table, the midnight revel, and the other haunts of licentiousness, confusion seizes upon him as its own. There will no longer be order in his family, nor order in his affairs, nor order in his time. The most important concerns of life are abandoned. Even the order of nature is by such persons inverted; night is changed into day, and day into night. Character, honour, and interest itself, are trampled under foot. You may with certainty prognosticate the ruin of these men to be just at hand. Disorder, arisen to its height, has nearly accomplished its work. The spots of death are upon them. Let every one who would escape the pestilential contagion,

contagion,

tagion, fly with haste from their company.

Blair.

§ 54. *Order to be preserved in your Society.*

Preserve order in the arrangement of your society; that is, entangle not yourselves in a perpetual and promiscuous crowd; select with prudence and propriety, those with whom you chuse to associate; let company and retreat succeed each other at measured intervals. There can be no order in his life, who allots not a due share of his time to retirement and reflection. He can neither prudently arrange his temporal affairs, nor properly attend to his spiritual interests. He lives not to himself, but to the world. By continual dissipation, he is rendered giddy and thoughtless. He contracts unavoidably from the world that spirit of disorder and confusion which is so prevalent in it.

It is not a sufficient preservation against this evil, that the circles of society in which you are engaged are not of a libertine and vicious kind. If they withdraw you from that attention to yourselves, and your domestic concerns, which becomes a good man, they are subversive of order, and inconsistent with your duty. What is innocent in itself, degenerates into a crime, from being carried to excess; and idle, trifling society, is nearly a-kin to such as is corrupting. One of the first principles of order is, to learn to be happy at home. It is in domestic retreat that every wise man finds his chief satisfaction. It is there he forms the plans which regulate his public conduct. He who knows not how to enjoy himself when alone, can never be long happy abroad. To his vacant mind, company may afford a temporary relief; but when forced to return to himself, he will be so much more oppressed and languid. Whereas, by a due mixture of public and private life, we keep free of the snares of both, and enjoy each to greater advantage.

Ibid.

§ 55. *A due Regard to Order necessary in Business, Time, Expence, and Amusements.*

Throughout your affairs, your time, your expence, your amusements, your society, the principle of order must be equally carried, if you expect to reap any of its happy fruits. For if into any one of those great departments of life you suffer disorder to enter, it will spread through all the rest. In vain, for instance, you pur-

pose to be orderly in the conduct of your affairs, if you be irregular in the distribution of your time. In vain you attempt to regulate your expence, if into your amusements, or your society, disorder has crept. You have admitted a principle of confusion which will defeat all your plans, and perplex and entangle what you sought to arrange. Uniformity is above all things necessary to order. If you desire that any thing should proceed according to method and rule, 'let all things be done in order.'

I must also admonish you, that in small, as well as in great affairs, a due regard to order is requisite. I mean not, that you ought to look on those minute attentions, which are apt to occupy frivolous minds, as connected either with virtue or wisdom: but I exhort you to remember, that disorder, like other immoralities, frequently takes rise from inconsiderable beginnings. They who, in the lesser transactions of life, are totally negligent of rule, will be in hazard of extending that negligence, by degrees, to such affairs and duties as will render them criminal. Remissness grows on all who study not to guard against it; and it is only by frequent exercise, that the habits of order and punctuality can be thoroughly confirmed.

Ibid.

§ 56. *Idleness avoided by the Observation of Order.*

By attending to order, you avoid idleness, that most fruitful source of crimes and evils. Acting upon a plan, meeting every thing in its own place, you constantly find innocent and useful employment for time. You are never at a loss how to dispose of your hours, or to fill up life agreeably. In the course of human action, there are two extremes equally dangerous to virtue; the multiplicity of affairs, and the total want of them. The man of order stands in the middle between these two extremes; and suffers from neither: he is occupied, but not oppressed. Whereas the disorderly, overloading one part of time, and leaving another vacant, are at one period overwhelmed with business, and at another either idle through want of employment, or indolent through perplexity. Those seasons of indolence and idleness, which recur so often in their life, are their most dangerous moments. The mind, unhappy in its situation, and clinging to every object which can occupy

or amuse it, is then aptest to throw itself into the arms of every vice and folly.

Farther; by the preservation of order, you check inconstancy and levity. Fickle by nature is the human heart. It is fond of change; and perpetually tends to start aside from the straight line of conduct. Hence arises the propriety of bringing ourselves under subjection to method and rule; which, though at first it may prove constraining, yet by degrees, and from the experience of its happy effects, becomes natural and agreeable. It rectifies those irregularities of temper and manners to which we give the name of caprice; and which are distinguished characteristics of a disorderly mind. It is the parent of steadiness of conduct. It forms consistency of character. It is the ground of all the confidence we repose in one another. For, the disorderly we know not where to find. In him only can we place any trust, who is uniform and regular; who lives by principle, not by humour; who acts upon a plan, and not by desultory motions.

Blair.

§ 57. *Order essential to Self-enjoyment and Felicity.*

Consider also how important it is to your self-enjoyment and felicity. Order is the source of peace; and peace is the highest of all temporal blessings. Order is indeed the only region in which tranquillity dwells. The very mention of confusion imports disturbance and vexation. Is it possible for that man to be happy, who cannot look into the state of his affairs, or the tenor of his conduct, without discerning all to be embroiled? who is either in the midst of remorse for what he has neglected to do, or in the midst of hurry to overtake what he finds, too late, was necessary to have been done? Such as live according to order, may be compared to the celestial bodies, which move in regular courses, and by stated laws; whose influence is beneficent; whose operations are quiet and tranquil. The disorderly, resemble those tumultuous elements on earth, which, by sudden and violent irruptions, disturb the course of nature. By mismanagement of affairs, by excess in expence, by irregularity in the indulgence of company and amusement, they are perpetually creating molestation both to themselves and others. They depart from their road to seek pleasure; and instead of it, they every where raise up sorrows. Being

always found out of their proper place, they of course interfere and jar with others. The disorders which they raise never fail to spread beyond their own line, and to involve many in confusion and distress; whence they necessarily become the authors of tumult and contention, of discord and enmity. Whereas order is the foundation of union. It allows every man to carry on his own affairs without disturbing his neighbour. It is the golden chain which holds together the societies of men in friendship and peace.

Ibid.

§ 58. *Care to be taken in suppressing criminal Thoughts.*

When criminal thoughts arise, attend to all the proper methods of speedily suppressing them. Take example from the unhappy industry which sinners discover in banishing good ones, when a natural sense of religion forces them on their conscience. How anxiously do they fly from themselves! How studiously do they drown the voice which upbraids them, in the noise of company or diversions! What numerous artifices do they employ, to evade the uneasiness which returns of reflection would produce!—Were we to use equal diligence in preventing the entrance of vicious suggestions, or in repelling them when entered, why should we not be equally successful in a much better cause?—As soon as you are sensible that any dangerous passion begins to ferment, instantly call in other passions, and other ideas, to your aid. Hasten to turn your thoughts into a different direction. Summon up whatever you have found to be of power, for composing and harmonizing your mind. Fly for assistance to serious studies, to prayer and devotion; or even fly to business or innocent society, if solitude be in hazard of favouring the seduction. By such means you may stop the progress of the growing evil: you may apply an antidote, before the poison has had time to work its full effect. *Ibid.*

§ 59. *Experience to be anticipated by Reflection.*

It is observed, that the young and the ignorant are always the most violent in pursuit. The knowledge which is forced upon them by longer acquaintance with the world, moderates their impetuosity. Study then to anticipate, by reflection, that knowledge which experience often purchases

chafes at too dear a price. Inure yourselves to frequent consideration of the emptiness of those pleasures which excite so much strife and commotion among mankind. Think how much more of true enjoyment is lost by the violence of passion, than by the want of those things which give occasion to that passion. Persuade yourselves, that the favour of God, and the possession of virtue, form the chief happiness of the rational nature. Let a contented mind, and a peaceful life, hold the next place in your estimation. These are the conclusions which the wise and thinking part of mankind have always formed. To these conclusions, after having run the race of passion, you will probably come at the last. By forming them betimes, you would make a seasonable escape from that tempestuous region, through which none can pass without suffering misery, contracting guilt, and undergoing severe remorse.

Blair.

§ 60. *The Beginnings of Passion to be opposed.*

Oppose early the beginnings of passion. Avoid particularly all such objects as are apt to excite passions which you know to predominate within you. As soon as you find the tempest rising, have recourse to every proper method, either of allaying its violence, or of escaping to a calmer shore: Hasten to call up emotions of an opposite nature. Study to conquer one passion by means of some other which is of less dangerous tendency. Never account anything small or trivial, which is in hazard of introducing disorder into your heart. Never make light of any desire which you feel gaining such progress as to threaten entire dominion. Blandishing it will appear at the first. As a gentle and innocent emotion, it may steal into the heart; but as it advances, is likely to pierce you through with many sorrows. What you indulged as a favourite amusement, will shortly become a serious business, and in the end may prove the burden of your life. Most of our passions flatter us in their rise, but their beginnings are treacherous: their growth is imperceptible; and the evils which they carry in their train, lie concealed, until their dominion is established. What Solomon says of one of them, holds true of them all, 'that their beginning is as when one letteth out water.' It issues from a small chink, which once might have been easily stopped; but being neglected, it is soon widened

by the stream, till the bank is at last totally thrown down, and the flood is at liberty to deluge the whole plain. *Ibid.*

§ 61. *The Government of Temper, as included in the Keeping of the Heart.*

Passions are quick and strong emotions, which by degrees subside. Temper is the disposition which remains after these emotions are past, and which forms the habitual propensity of the soul. The one are like the stream when it is swollen by the torrent, and ruffled by the winds; the other resembles it when running within its bed, with its natural force and velocity. The influence of temper is more silent and imperceptible than that of passion; it operates with less violence; but as its operation is constant, it produces effects no less considerable. It is evident, therefore, that it highly deserves to be considered in a religious view.

Many, indeed, are averse to behold it in this light. They place a good temper upon the same footing with a healthy constitution of body. They consider it as a natural felicity which some enjoy; but for the want of which, others are not morally culpable, nor accountable to God: and hence the opinion has sometimes prevailed, that a bad temper might be consistent with a state of grace. If this were true, it would overturn that whole doctrine, of which the gospel is so full, 'that regeneration, or change of nature, is the essential characteristic of a Christian. It would suppose, that grace might dwell amidst malevolence and rancour, and that heaven might be enjoyed by such as are strangers to charity and love.—It will readily be admitted that some, by the original frame of their mind, are more favourably inclined than others, towards certain good dispositions and habits. But this affords no justification to those who neglect to oppose the corruptions to which they are prone. Let no man imagine, that the human heart is a soil altogether unsusceptible of culture! or that the worst temper may not, through the assistance of grace, be reformed by attention and discipline. Settled depravity of temper is always owing to our own indulgence. If, in place of checking, we nourish that malignity of disposition to which we are inclined, all the consequences will be placed to our account, and every excuse, from natural constitution, be rejected at the tribunal of Heaven.

Ibid.

§ 62. *A peaceable Temper and condescending Manners recommended.*

What first presents itself to be recommended, is a peaceable temper; a disposition averse to give offence, and desirous of cultivating harmony, and amicable intercourse in society. This supposes yielding and condescending manners, unwillingness to contend with others about trifles, and, in contests that are unavoidable, proper moderation of spirit. Such a temper is the first principle of self-enjoyment; it is the basis of all order and happiness among mankind. The positive and contentious, the rude and quarrelsome, are the bane of society; they seem destined to blast the small share of comfort which nature has here allotted to man. But they cannot disturb the peace of others, more than they break their own. The hurricane rages first in their own bosom, before it is let forth upon the world. In the tempest which they raise, they are always lost; and frequently it is their lot to perish.

A peaceable temper must be supported by a candid one, or a disposition to view the conduct of others with fairness and impartiality. This stands opposed to a jealous and suspicious temper; which ascribes every action to the worst motive, and throws a black shade over every character. As you would be happy in yourselves, or in your connections with others, guard against this malignant spirit. Study that charity which thinketh no evil; that temper which, without degenerating into credulity, will dispose you to be just; and which can allow you to observe an error, without imputing it as a crime. Thus you will be kept free from that continual irritation which imaginary injuries raise in a suspicious breast; and will walk among men as your brethren, not your enemies.

But to be peaceable, and to be candid, is not all that is required of a good man. He must cultivate a kind, generous, and sympathizing temper, which feels for distress wherever it is beheld; which enters into the concerns of his friends with ardour; and to all with whom he has intercourse, is gentle, obliging, and humane. How amiable appears such a disposition, when contrasted with a malicious or envious temper, which wraps itself up in its own narrow interests, looks with an evil eye on the success of others, and with an unnatural satisfaction feeds on their dis-

appointments or miseries! How little does he know of the true happiness of life, who is a stranger to that intercourse of good offices and kind affections, which, by a pleasing charm, attach men to one another, and circulate joy from heart to heart!

Blair.

§ 63. *Numerous Occasions offer for the Exercise of a benevolent Temper.*

You are not to imagine that a benevolent temper finds no exercise, unless when opportunities offer of performing actions of high generosity, or of extensive utility; these may seldom occur: the condition of the greater part of mankind in a good measure precludes them. But in the ordinary round of human affairs, a thousand occasions daily present themselves of mitigating the vexations which others suffer, of soothing their minds, of aiding their interest, of promoting their cheerfulness, or ease. Such occasions may relate to the smaller incidents of life: But let us remember that of small incidents, the system of human life is chiefly composed. The attentions which respect these, when suggested by real benignity of temper, are often more material to the happiness of those around us, than actions which carry the appearance of greater dignity and splendour. No wise or good man ought to account any rules of behaviour as below his regard, which tend to cement the great brotherhood of mankind in comfortable union.

Particularly in the course of that familiar intercourse which belongs to domestic life, all the virtues of temper find an ample range. It is very unfortunate, that within that circle, men too often think themselves at liberty to give unrestrained vent to the caprice of passion and humour. Whereas there, on the contrary, more than anywhere, it concerns them to attend to the government of their heart; to check what is violent in their tempers, and to soften what is harsh in their manners. For there the temper is formed. There the real character displays itself. The forms of the world disguise men when abroad; but within his own family, every man is known to be what he truly is.—In all our intercourse, then, with others, particularly in that which is closest and most intimate, let us cultivate a peaceable, a candid, a gentle and friendly temper. This is the temper to which, by repeated injunctions, our holy religion seeks to form us. This

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was the temper of Christ. This is the temper of Heaven. Blair.

§ 64. *A contented Temper the greatest Blessing, and most material Requisite to the proper Discharge of our Duties.*

A contented temper is one of the greatest blessings that can be enjoyed by man, and one of the most material requisites to the proper discharge of the duties of every station. For a fretful and discontented temper renders one incapable of performing aright any part in life. It is unthankful and impious towards God; and towards men provoking and unjust. It is a gangrene which preys on the vitals, and infects the whole constitution with disease and putrefaction. Subdue pride and vanity, and you will take the most effectual method of eradicating this distemper. You will no longer behold the objects around you with jaundiced eyes. You will take in good part the blessings which Providence is pleased to bestow, and the degree of favour which your fellow-creatures are disposed to grant you. Viewing yourselves, with all your imperfections and failings, in a just light, you will rather be surprised at your enjoying so many good things, than discontented because there are any which you want. From an humble and contented temper, will spring a cheerful one. This, if not in itself a virtue, is at least the garb in which virtue should be always arrayed. Piety and goodness ought never to be marked with that dejection which sometimes takes rise from superstition, but which is the proper portion only of guilt. At the same time, the cheerfulness belonging to virtue, is to be carefully distinguished from that light and giddy temper which characterises folly, and is so often found among the dissipated and vicious part of mankind. Their gaiety is owing to a total want of reflection; and brings with it the usual consequences of an unthinking habit, shame, remorse, and heaviness of heart, in the end. The cheerfulness of a well-regulated mind, springs from a good conscience and the favour of Heaven, and is bounded by temperance and reason. It makes a man happy in himself, and promotes the happiness of all around him. It is the clear and calm sunshine of a mind illuminated by piety and virtue. It crowns all other good dispositions, and comprehends the general effect which they ought to produce on the heart.

Ibid.

§ 65. *The Desire of Praise subservient to many valuable Purposes.*

To a variety of good purposes it is subservient, and on many occasions co-operates with the principle of virtue. It awakens us from sloth, invigorates activity, and stimulates our efforts to excel. It has given rise to most of the splendid, and to many of the useful enterprizes of men. It has animated the patriot, and fired the hero. Magnanimity, generosity, and fortitude, are what all mankind admire. Hence, such as were actuated by the desire of extensive fame, have been prompted to deeds which either participated of the spirit, or at least carried the appearance, of distinguished virtue. The desire of praise is generally connected with all the finer sensibilities of human nature. It affords a ground on which exhortation, counsel, and reproof, can work a proper effect. Whereas, to be entirely destitute of this passion betokens an ignoble mind, on which no moral impression is easily made. Where there is no desire of praise, there will be also no sense of reproach; and if that be extinguished, one of the principal guards of virtue is removed, and the mind thrown open to many opprobrious pursuits. He whose countenance never glowed with shame, and whose heart never beat at the sound of praise, is not destined for any honourable distinction; is likely to grovel in the sordid quest of gain; or to slumber life away in the indolence of selfish pleasures.

Abstracted from the sentiments which are connected with it as a principle of action, the esteem of our fellow-creatures is an object which, on account of the advantages it brings, may be lawfully pursued. It is necessary to our success, in every fair and honest undertaking. Not only our private interest, but our public usefulness, depends, in a great measure, upon it. The sphere of our influence is contracted or enlarged, in proportion to the degree in which we enjoy the good opinion of the public. Men listen with an unwilling ear to one whom they do not honour; while a respected character adds weight to example, and authority to counsel. To desire the esteem of others for the sake of its effects, is not only allowable, but in many cases is our duty: and to be totally indifferent to praise or censure, is so far from being a virtue, that it is a real defect in character.

Ibid.

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§ 66.

§ 66. *Excessive Desire of Praise tends to corrupt the Heart, and to disregard the Admonitions of Conscience.*

An excessive love of praise never fails to undermine the regard due to conscience, and to corrupt the heart. It turns off the eye of the mind from the ends which it ought chiefly to keep in view; and sets up a false light for its guide. Its influence is the more dangerous, as the colour which it assumes is often fair; and its garb and appearance are nearly allied to that of virtue. The love of glory, I before admitted, may give birth to actions which are both splendid and useful. At a distance they strike the eye with uncommon brightness; but on a nearer and stricter survey, their lustre is often tarnished. They are found to want that sacred and venerable dignity which characterises true virtue. Little passions and selfish interests entered into the motives of those who performed them. They were jealous of a competitor. They sought to humble a rival. They looked round for spectators to admire them. All is magnanimity, generosity, and courage, to public view. But the ignoble source whence these seeming virtues take their rise, is hidden. Without appears the hero; within, is found the man of dust and clay. Consult such as have been intimately connected with the followers of renown; and seldom or never will you find, that they held them in the same esteem with those who viewed them from afar. There is nothing except simplicity of intention, and purity of principle, that can stand the test of near approach and strict examination.

Blair.

§ 67. *That Discipline which teaches to moderate the Eagerness of worldly Passions, and to fortify the Mind with the Principles of Virtue, is more conducive to true Happiness than the Possession of all the Goods of Fortune.*

That discipline which corrects the eagerness of worldly passions, which fortifies the heart with virtuous principles, which enlightens the mind with useful knowledge, and furnishes to it matter of enjoyment from within itself, is of more consequence to real felicity, than all the provision which we can make of the goods of fortune. To this let us bend our chief attention. Let us keep the heart with all diligence, see-

ing out of it are the issues of life. Let us account our mind the most important province which is committed to our care; and if we cannot rule fortune, study at least to rule ourselves. Let us propose for our object, not worldly success, which it depends not on us to obtain, but that upright and honourable discharge of our duty in every conjuncture, which, through the divine assistance, is always within our power. Let our happiness be sought where our proper praise is found; and that be accounted our only real evil, which is the evil of our nature; not that, which is either the appointment of Providence, or which arises from the evil of others.

Ibid.

§ 68. *Religious Knowledge of great Consolation and Relief amidst the Distresses of Life.*

Consider it in the light of consolation; as bringing aid and relief to us, amidst the distresses of life. Here religion incontestibly triumphs; and its happy effects in this respect furnish a strong argument to every benevolent mind, for wishing them to be farther diffused throughout the world. For, without the belief and hope afforded by divine revelation, the circumstances of man are extremely forlorn. He finds himself placed here as a stranger in a vast universe, where the powers and operations of nature are very imperfectly known; where both the beginnings and the issues of things are involved in mysterious darkness; where he is unable to discover with any certainty, whence he sprang, or for what purpose he was brought into this state of existence; whether he be subjected to the government of a mild, or of a wrathful ruler; what construction he is to put on many of the dispensations of his providence; and what his fate is to be when he departs hence. What a disconsolate situation to a serious, enquiring mind! The greater degree of virtue it possesses, its sensibility is likely to be the more oppressed by this burden of labouring thought. Even though it were in one's power to banish all uneasy thought, and to fill up the hours of life with perpetual amusement; life so filled up would, upon reflection, appear poor and trivial. But these are far from being the terms upon which man is brought into this world. He is conscious that his being is frail and feeble; he sees himself beset with various dangers, and is exposed to many a melancholy

lancholy apprehension, from the evils which he may have to encounter, before he arrives at the close of life. In this distressed condition, to reveal to him such discoveries of the Supreme Being as the Christian religion affords, is to reveal to him a father and a friend; is to let in a ray of the most cheering light upon the darkness of the human estate. He who was before a destitute orphan, wandering in the inhospitable desert, has now gained a shelter from the bitter and inclement blast. He now knows to whom to pray, and in whom to trust; where to unbosom his sorrows; and from what hand to look for relief.

It is certain, that when the heart bleeds from some wound of recent misfortune, nothing is of equal efficacy with religious comfort. It is of power to enlighten the darkest hour, and to assuage the severest woe, by the belief of divine favour, and the prospect of a blessed immortality. In such hopes, the mind expatiates with joy; and when bereaved of its earthly friends, solaces itself with the thoughts of one friend who will never forsake it. Refined reasonings, concerning the nature of the human condition, and the improvement which philosophy teaches us to make of every event, may entertain the mind when it is at ease; may, perhaps, contribute to sooth it, when slightly touched with sorrow; but when it is torn with any sore distress, they are cold and feeble, compared with a direct promise from the word of God. This is an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast. This has given consolation and refuge to many a virtuous heart, at a time when the most cogent reasonings would have proved utterly unavailing.

Upon the approach of death especially, when, if a man thinks at all, his anxiety about his future interests must naturally increase, the power of religious consolation is sensibly felt. Then appears, in the most striking light, the high value of the discoveries made by the Gospel; not only life and immortality revealed, but a Mediator with God discovered; mercy proclaimed, through him, to the frailties of the penitent and the humble; and his presence promised to be with them when they are passing through the valley of the shadow of death, in order to bring them safe into unseen habitations of rest and joy. Here is ground for their leaving the world with comfort and peace. But in this severe and trying period, this labouring hour

of nature, how shall the unhappy man support himself, who knows not, or believes not, the hope of religion? Secretly conscious to himself, that he has not acted his part as he ought to have done, the sins of his past life arise before him in sad remembrance. He wishes to exist after death, and yet dreads that existence. The Governor of the world is unknown. He cannot tell whether every endeavour to obtain his mercy may not be in vain. All is awful obscurity around him; and in the midst of endless doubts and perplexities, the trembling reluctant soul is forced away from the body. As the misfortunes of life must, to such a man, have been most oppressive; so its end is bitter: his sun sets in a dark cloud; and the night of death closes over his head, full of misery.

Blair.

§ 69. *Sense of Right and Wrong, independent of Religion.*

Mankind certainly have a sense of right and wrong, independent of religious belief; but experience shews, that the allurements of present pleasure, and the impetuosity of passion, are sufficient to prevent men from acting agreeable to this moral sense, unless it be supported by religion, the influence of which upon the imagination and passions, if properly directed, is extremely powerful. We shall readily acknowledge that many of the greatest enemies of religion have been distinguished for their honour, probity, and good-nature. But it is to be considered, that many virtues, as well as vices, are constitutional. A cool and equal temper, a dull imagination, and unfeeling heart, ensure the possession of many virtues, or rather, are a security against many vices. They may produce temperance, chastity, honesty, prudence, and a harmless, inoffensive behaviour. Whereas keen passions, a warm imagination, and great sensibility of heart, lay a natural foundation for prodigality, debauchery, and ambition: attended, however, with the seeds of all the social and most heroic virtues. Such a temperature of mind carries along with it a check to its constitutional vices, by rendering those possessed of it peculiarly susceptible of religious impressions. They often appear indeed to be the greatest enemies to religion, but that is entirely owing to their impatience of its restraints. Its most dangerous enemies have ever been among the temperate and chaste philosophers, void

void of passion and sensibility, who had no vicious appetites to be restrained by its influence, and who were unsusceptible of its terrors or its pleasures.

Gregory.

§ 70. *Infidelity owing to Insensibility of Heart.*

Absolute infidelity, or settled scepticism in religion, we acknowledge, is no proof of want of understanding, or a vicious disposition, but is certainly a very strong presumption of the want of imagination and sensibility of heart, and of a perverted understanding. Some philosophers have been infidels; few, men of taste and sentiment. Yet the examples of Lord Bacon, Mr. Locke, and Sir Isaac Newton, among many other first names in philosophy, are a sufficient evidence, that religious belief is perfectly compatible with the clearest and most enlarged understanding.

Ibid.

§ 71. *Religion not founded on Weakness of Mind.*

Several of those who have surmounted what they call religious prejudices themselves, affect to treat such as are not ashamed to avow their regard to religion, as men of weak understandings and feeble minds: but this shews either want of candour, or great ignorance of human nature. The fundamental articles of religion have been very generally believed by men the most distinguished for acuteness and accuracy of judgment. Nay, it is unjust to infer the weakness of a person's head on other subjects, from his attachment even to the fooleries of superstition. Experience shews, that when the imagination is heated, and the affections deeply interested, they level all distinctions of understanding; yet this affords no presumption of a shallow judgment in subjects where the imagination and passions have no influence.

Ibid.

§ 72. *Effects of Religion, Scepticism, and Infidelity.*

Feebleness of mind is a reproach frequently thrown, not only upon such as have a sense of religion, but upon all who possess warm, open, chearful tempers, and hearts peculiarly disposed to love and friendship. But the reproach is ill founded. Strength of mind does not consist in a peevish temper, in a hard inflexible heart, and in bid-

ding defiance to God Almighty: it consists in an active, resolute spirit; in a spirit that enables a man to act his part in the world with propriety; and to bear the misfortunes of life with uniform fortitude and dignity. This is a strength of mind, which neither atheism nor universal scepticism will ever be able to inspire. On the contrary, their tendency will be found to chill all the powers of imagination; to depress spirit as well as genius; to sour the temper and contract the heart. The highest religious spirit, and veneration for Providence, breathes in the writings of the ancient stoics; a sect distinguished for producing the most active, intrepid, virtuous men, that ever did honour to human nature.

Can it be pretended, that atheism or universal scepticism have any tendency to form such characters? Do they tend to inspire that magnanimity and elevation of mind, that superiority to selfish and sensual gratifications, that contempt of danger and of death, when the cause of virtue, of liberty, or their country, required it, which distinguish the characters of patriots and heroes? Or is their influence more favourable on the humbler and gentler virtues of private and domestic life? Do they soften the heart, and render it more delicately sensible of the thousand nameless duties and endearments of a husband, a father, or a friend? Do they produce that habitual serenity and chearfulness of temper, that gaiety of heart, which makes a man beloved as a companion? or do they dilate the heart with the liberal and generous sentiments, and that love of human kind, which would render him revered and blessed as the patron of depressed merit, the friend of the widow and orphan, the refuge and support of the poor and the unhappy?

The general opinion of mankind, that there is a strong connection between a religious disposition and a feeling heart, appears from the universal dislike which all men have to infidelity in the fair sex. We not only look on it as removing the principal security we have for their virtue, but as the strongest proof of their want of that softness and delicate sensibility of heart, which peculiarly endears them to us, and more effectually secures their amplex over us, than any quality they can possess.

There are, indeed, some men who can persuade themselves, that there is no supreme intelligence who directs the course

of nature; who can see those they have been connected with by the strongest bonds of nature and friendship gradually disappearing; who are persuaded, that this separation is final and eternal; and who expect, that they themselves shall soon sink down after them into nothing; and yet such men appear easy and contented. But to a sensible heart, and particularly to a heart softened by past endearments of love or friendship, such opinions are attended with gloom inexpressible; they strike a damp into all the pleasures and enjoyments of life, and cut off those prospects which alone can comfort the soul under certain distresses, where all other aid is feeble and ineffectual.

Scepticism, or suspense of judgment, as to the truth of the great articles of religion, is attended with the same fatal effects. Wherever the affections are deeply interested, a state of suspense is more intolerable, and more distracting to the mind, than the sad assurance of the evil which is most dreaded.

Gregory.

§ 73. *Comforts of Religion.*

There are many who have passed the age of youth and beauty, who have resigned the pleasures of that smiling season, who begin to decline into the vale of years, impaired in their health, depressed in their fortunes, stript of their friends, their children, and perhaps still more tender connections. What resource can this world afford them? It presents a dark and dreary waste through which there does not issue a single ray of comfort. Every delusive prospect of ambition is now at an end; long experience of mankind, an experience very different from what the open and generous soul of youth had fondly dreamt of, has rendered the heart almost inaccessible to new friendships. The principal sources of activity are taken away, when those for whom we labour are cut off from us, those who animated, and those who sweetened all the toils of life. Where then can the soul find refuge, but in the bosom of religion? There she is admitted to those prospects of Providence and futurity, which alone can warm and fill the heart. I speak here of such as retain the feelings of humanity, whom misfortunes have softened, and perhaps rendered more delicately sensible; not of such as possess that stupid insensibility, which some are pleased to dignify with the name of philosophy.

It should therefore be expected that those philosophers, who stand in no need themselves of the assistance of religion to support their virtue, and who never feel the want of its consolations, would yet have the humanity to consider the very different situation of the rest of mankind, and not endeavour to deprive them of what habit, at least, if they will not allow it to be nature, has made necessary to their morals, and to their happiness.—It might be expected, that humanity would prevent them from breaking into the last retreat of the unfortunate, who can no longer be objects of their envy or resentment, and tearing from them their only remaining comfort. The attempt to ridicule religion may be agreeable to some, by relieving them from restraint upon their pleasures, and may render others very miserable, by making them doubt those truths, in which they were most deeply interested; but it can convey real good and happiness to no one individual.

Ibid.

§ 74. *Cause of Zeal to propagate Infidelity.*

To support openly and avowedly the cause of infidelity, may be owing, in some, to the vanity of appearing wiser than the rest of mankind; to vanity, that ambitious passion that seeks for food, not only in the affectation of every beauty and every virtue that adorn humanity, but of every vice and perversion of the understanding that disgrace it. The zeal of making proselytes to it, may often be attributed to a like vanity of possessing a direction and ascendancy over the minds of men; which is a very flattering species of superiority. But there seems to be some other cause that secretly influences the conduct of some that reject all religion, who, from the rest of their character, cannot be suspected of vanity, in any ambition of such superiority. This we shall attempt to explain.

The very differing in opinion, upon any interesting subject, from all around us, gives a disagreeable sensation. This must be greatly increased in the present case, as the feeling which attends infidelity or scepticism in religion is certainly a comfortless one, where there is the least degree of sensibility.—Sympathy is much more sought after by an unhappy mind, than by one chearful and at ease. We require a support in the one case, which in the other is not necessary. A person, therefore, void of religion, feels himself as it were alone

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in the midst of society; and though, for prudential reasons, he chooses, on some occasions, to disguise his sentiments, and join in some form of religious worship, yet this, to a candid and ingenuous mind, must always be very painful; nor does it abate the disagreeable feeling which a social spirit has in finding itself alone, and without any friend to soothe and participate its uneasiness. This seems to have a considerable share in that anxiety which Free-Thinkers generally discover to make proselytes to their opinions; an anxiety much greater than what is shewn by those whose minds are at ease in the enjoyment of happier prospects.

Gregory.

§ 75. *Zeal in the Propagation of Infidelity inexcusable.*

The excuse which infidel writers plead for their conduct, is a regard for the cause of truth. But this is a very insufficient one. None of them act upon this principle, in its largest extent and application, in common life; nor could any man live in the world, and pretend so to do. In the pursuit of happiness, 'our being's end and aim *,' the discovery of truth is far from being the most important object. It is true, the mind receives a high pleasure from the investigation and discovery of truth, in the abstract sciences, in the works of nature and art; but in all subjects, where the imagination and affections are deeply concerned, we regard it only so far as it is subservient to them.—One of the first principles of society, of decency, and of good manners, is, that no man is entitled to say every thing he thinks true, when it would be injurious or offensive to his neighbour. If it was not for this principle, all mankind would be in a state of hostility.

Suppose a person to lose an only child, the sole comfort and happiness of his life: when the first overflowings of nature are past, he recollects the infinite goodness and impenetrable wisdom of the Disposer of all events; he is persuaded, that the revolution of a few years will again unite him to his child, never more to be separated. With these sentiments he acquiesces, with a melancholy yet pleasing resignation, to the divine will. Now, supposing all this to be a deception, a pleasing dream, would not the general sense of mankind condemn the philosopher, as barbarous and inhuman, who should attempt to wake him out

* Pope.

of it?—Yet so far does vanity prevail over good-nature, that we frequently see men, on other occasions of the most benevolent tempers, labouring to cut off that hope which can alone cheer the heart under all the pressures and afflictions of human life, and enable us to resign it with cheerfulness and dignity!

Religion may be considered in three different views. First, As containing doctrines relating to the being and perfections of God, his moral administration of the world, a future state of existence, and particular communications to mankind, by an immediate supernatural revelation.—Secondly, As a rule of life and manners.—Thirdly, As the source of certain peculiar affections of the mind, which either give pleasure or pain, according to the particular genius and spirit of the religion that inspires them. *Ibid.*

§ 76. *Religion considered as a Science.*

In the first of these views, which gives a foundation to all religious belief, and on which the other two depend, Reason is principally concerned. On this subject, the greatest efforts of human genius and application have been exerted, and with the most desirable success, in those great and important articles that seem most immediately to affect the interest and happiness of mankind. But when our enquiries here are pushed to a certain length, we find that Providence has set bounds to our reason, and even to our capacities of apprehension. This is particularly the case with respect to infinity, and the moral economy of the Deity. The objects are here, in a great measure, beyond the reach of our conception; and induction, from experience, on which all our other reasonings are founded, cannot be applied to a subject altogether dissimilar to any thing we are acquainted with.—Many of the fundamental articles of religion are such, that the mind may have the fullest conviction of their truth, but they must be viewed at a distance, and are rather the objects of silent and religious veneration, than of metaphysical disquisition. If the mind attempts to bring them to a nearer view, it is confounded with their strangeness and immensity.

When we pursue our enquiries into any part of nature beyond certain bounds, we find ourselves involved in perplexity and darkness. But there is this remarkable difference between these and religious enquiries;

quiries: in the investigation of nature, we can always make a progress in knowledge, and approximate to the truth by the proper exertion of genius and observation. But our enquiries into religious subjects are confined within very narrow bounds; nor can any force of reason or application lead the mind one step beyond that impenetrable gulf, which separates the visible and invisible world.

Though the articles of religious belief, which fall within the comprehension of mankind, and seem essential to their happiness, are few and simple, yet ingenious men have contrived to erect them into most tremendous systems of metaphysical subtlety, which will long remain monuments both of the extent and the weakness of human understanding. The pernicious consequences of such systems, have been various. By attempting to establish too much, they have hurt the foundation of the most interesting principles of religion. —Most men are educated in a belief of the peculiar and distinguishing opinions of some one religious sect or other. They are taught, that all these are equally founded on divine authority, or the clearest deductions of reason; by which means their system of religion hangs so much together, that one part cannot be shaken without endangering the whole. But wherever any freedom of enquiry is allowed, the absurdity of some of these opinions, and the uncertain foundation of others, cannot be concealed. This naturally begets a general distrust of the whole, with that fatal lukewarmness in religion, which is its necessary consequence.

The very habit of frequent reasoning and disputing upon religious subjects, diminishes that reverence with which the mind would otherwise consider them. This seems particularly to be the case, when men presume to enter into a minute scrutiny of the views and œconomy of Providence, in the administration of the world; why the Supreme Being made it as it is; the freedom of his actions; and many other such questions, infinitely beyond our reach. The natural tendency of this, is to lessen that awful veneration with which we ought always to contemplate the Divinity, but which can never be preserved, when men canvas his ways with such unwarrantable freedom. Accordingly we find, amongst those sectaries where such disquisitions have principally prevailed, that he has been mentioned and even addressed

with the most indecent and shocking familiarity. The truly devotional spirit, whose chief foundation and characteristic is genuine and profound humility, is not to be looked for among such persons.

Another bad effect of this speculative theology, has been to withdraw people's attention from its practical duties. —We usually find, that those who are most distinguished by their excessive zeal for opinions in religion, shew great moderation and coolness as to its precepts; and their great severity in this respect, is commonly exerted against a few vices where the heart is but little concerned, and to which their own dispositions preserved them from any temptations.

But the worst effects of speculative and controversial theology, are those which it produces on the temper and affections. —When the mind is kept constantly embarrassed in a perplexed and thorny path, where it can find no steady light to shew the way, nor foundation to rest on, the temper looses its native cheerfulness, and contracts a gloom and severity, partly from the chagrin of disappointment, and partly from the social and kind affections being extinguished for want of exercise. When this evil is exasperated by opposition and dispute, the consequences prove very fatal to the peace of society; especially when men are persuaded, that their holding certain opinions entitles them to the divine favour; and that those who differ from them, are devoted to eternal destruction. This persuasion breaks at once all the ties of society. The toleration of men who hold erroneous opinions, is considered as conniving at their destroying not only themselves, but all others who come within the reach of their influence. This produces that cruel and implacable spirit, which has so often disgraced the cause of religion, and dishonoured humanity.

Yet the effects of religious controversy have sometimes proved beneficial to mankind. That spirit of free enquiry, which incited the first Reformers to shake off the yoke of ecclesiastical tyranny, naturally begot just sentiments of civil liberty, especially when irritated by persecution. When such sentiments came to be united with that bold enthusiasm, that severity of temper and manners that distinguished some of the reformed sects, they produced those resolute and inflexible men, who alone were able to assert the cause of liberty, in an age when the Christian world was enervated

vated by luxury or superstition; and to such men we owe that freedom and happy constitution which we at present enjoy.—But these advantages of religious enthusiasm have been but accidental.

In general it would appear, that religion, considered as a science, in the manner it has been usually treated, is but little beneficial to mankind, neither tending to enlarge the understanding, sweeten the temper, or mend the heart. At the same time, the labours of ingenious men, in explaining obscure and difficult passages of sacred writ, have been highly useful and necessary. And though it is natural for men to carry their speculations, on a subject that so nearly concerns their present and eternal happiness, farther than reason extends, or than is clearly and expressly revealed; yet these can be followed by no bad consequences, if they are carried on with that modesty and reverence which the subject requires. They become pernicious only when they are formed into systems, to which the same credit and submission is required as to Holy Writ itself.

Gregory.

§ 77. *Religion considered as a Rule of Life and Manners.*

We shall now proceed to consider religion as a rule of life and manners. In this respect, its influence is very extensive and beneficial, even when disfigured by the wildest superstition; as it is able to check and conquer those passions, which reason and philosophy are too weak to encounter. But it is much to be regretted, that the application of religion to this end, hath not been attended to with that care which the importance of the subject required.—The speculative part of religion seems generally to have engrossed the attention of men of genius. This has been the fate of all the useful and practical arts of life; and the application of religion, to the regulation of life and manners, must be considered entirely as a practical art.—The causes of this neglect, seem to be these: Men of a philosophical genius have an aversion to all application, where the active powers of their own minds are not immediately employed. But in acquiring any practical art, a philosopher is obliged to spend most of his time in employments where his genius and understanding have no exercise. The fate of the practical arts of medicine and religion have been pretty similar: the object of the one, is to cure the diseases of the body; of the other, to

cure the diseases of the mind. The progress and degrees of perfection of both these arts ought to be estimated by no other standard, than their success in the cure of the diseases to which they are severally applied. In medicine, the facts on which the art depends, are so numerous and complicated, so misrepresented by fraud, credulity, or a heated imagination, that there has hardly ever been found a truly philosophical genius who has attempted the practical part of it. There are, indeed, many obstacles of different kinds, which occur to render any improvement in the practice of physic a matter of the utmost difficulty, at least whilst the profession rests on its present narrow foundation. Almost all physicians who have been men of ingenuity, have amused themselves in forming theories, which gave exercise to their invention, and at the same time contributed to their reputation. Instead of being at the trouble of making observations themselves, they culled, out of the promiscuous multitude already made, such as best suited their purpose, and dressed them up in the way their system required. In consequence of this, the history of medicine does not so much exhibit the history of a progressive art, as a history of opinions which prevailed perhaps for twenty or thirty years, and then sunk into contempt and oblivion. The case has been nearly similar in practical divinity: but this is attended with much greater difficulties than the practical part of medicine; in this last, nothing is required but assiduous and accurate observation, and a good understanding to direct the proper application of such observation. *Ibid.*

§ 78. *How Religion is to be applied to cure the Diseases of the Mind.*

To cure the diseases of the mind, there is required that intimate knowledge of the human heart, which must be drawn from life itself, and which books can never teach; of the various disguises under which vice recommends herself to the imagination; of the artful association of ideas which she forms there; and of the many nameless circumstances that soften the heart and render it accessible. It is likewise necessary to have a knowledge of the arts of insinuation and persuasion, of the art of breaking false and unnatural associations of ideas, or inducing counter-associations, and opposing one passion to another; and after all this knowledge is acquired,

quired, the successful application of it to practice depends, in a considerable degree, on powers, which no extent of understanding can confer.

Vice does not depend so much on a perversion of the understanding, as of the imagination and passions, and on habits originally founded on these. A vicious man is generally sensible enough that his conduct is wrong; he knows that vice is contrary both to his duty and to his interest; and therefore, all laboured reasoning, to satisfy his understanding of these truths, is useless, because the disease does not lie in the understanding. The evil is seated in the heart. The imaginations and passions are engaged on its side; and to them the cure must be applied. Here has been the general defect of writings and sermons, intended to reform mankind. Many ingenious and sensible remarks are made on the several duties of religion, and very judicious arguments are brought to enforce them. Such performances may be attended to with pleasure, by pious and well-disposed persons, who likewise may derive from thence useful instruction for their conduct in life. The wicked and profligate, if ever books of this sort fall in their way, very readily allow, that what they contain are great and eternal truths; but they leave no lasting impression. If any thing can rouse, it is the power of lively and pathetic description, which traces and lays open their hearts through all their windings and disguises, makes them see and confess their own characters in all their deformity and horror, impresses their hearts, and interests their passions by all the motives of love, gratitude, and fear, the prospect of rewards and punishments, and whatever other motives religion or nature may dictate. But to do this effectually, requires very different powers from those of the understanding: a lively and well regulated imagination is essentially requisite.

Gregory.

§ 79. *On Public Preaching.*

In public addresses to an audience, the great end of reformation is most effectually promoted; because all the powers of voice and action, all the arts of eloquence, may be brought to give their assistance. But some of those arts depend on gifts of nature, and cannot be attained by any strength of genius or understanding: even where nature has been liberal of those necessary requisites, they must be cultivated

by much practice, before the proper exercise of them can be acquired. Thus, a public speaker may have a voice that is musical and of great compass; but it requires much time and labour to attain its just modulation, and that variety of flexion and tone, which a pathetic discourse requires. The same difficulty attends the acquisition of that propriety of action, that power over the expressive features of the countenance, particularly of the eyes, so necessary to command the hearts and passions of an audience.

It is usually thought that a preacher, who feels what he is saying himself, will naturally speak with that tone of voice and expression in his countenance, that best suits the subject, and which cannot fail to move his audience: thus it is said, a person under the influence of fear, anger, or sorrow, looks and speaks in the manner naturally expressive of these emotions. This is true in some measure; but it can never be supposed, that any preacher will be able to enter into his subject with such real warmth upon every occasion. Besides, every prudent man will be afraid to abandon himself so entirely to any impression, as he must do to produce this effect. Most men, when strongly affected by any passion or emotion, have some peculiarity in their appearance, which does not belong to the natural expression of such an emotion. If this be not properly corrected, a public speaker, who is really warm and animated with his subject, may nevertheless make a very ridiculous and contemptible figure. It is the business of art, to shew nature in her most amiable and graceful forms, and not with those peculiarities in which she appears in particular instances; and it is this difficulty of properly representing nature, that renders the eloquence and action both of the pulpit and the stage, acquisitions of such difficult attainment.

But, besides those talents inherent in the preacher himself, an intimate knowledge of nature will suggest the necessity of attending to certain external circumstances, which operate powerfully on the mind, and prepare it for receiving the designed impressions. Such, in particular, is the proper regulation of church-music, and the solemnity and pomp of public worship. Independent of the effect that these particulars have on the imagination, it might be expected, that a just taste, a sense of decency and propriety, would make them more attended to than we find they

they are. We acknowledge that they have been abused, and have occasioned the grossest superstition; but this universal propensity to carry them to excess, is the strongest proof that the attachment to them is deeply rooted in human nature, and consequently that it is the business of good sense to regulate, and not vainly to attempt to extinguish it. Many religious sects, in their infancy, have supported themselves without any of these external assistances; but when time has abated the fervor of their first zeal, we always find that their public worship has been conducted with the most remarkable coldness and inattention, unless supported by well-regulated ceremonies. In fact, it will be found, that those sects who at their commencement have been most distinguished for a religious enthusiasm that despised all forms, and the genius of whose tenets could not admit the use of any, have either been of short duration, or ended in infidelity.

The many difficulties that attend the practical art of making religion influence the manners and lives of mankind, by acquiring a command over the imagination and passions, have made it too generally neglected, even by the most eminent of the clergy for learning and good sense. These have rather chosen to confine themselves to a track, where they were sure to excel by the force of their own genius, than to attempt a road where their success was doubtful, and where they might be outshone by men greatly their inferiors. It has therefore been principally cultivated by men of lively imaginations, possessed of some natural advantages of voice and manner. But as no art can ever become very beneficial to mankind, unless it be under the direction of genius and good sense, it has too often happened, that the art we are now speaking of has become subservient to the wildest fanaticism, sometimes to the gratification of vanity, and sometimes to still more unworthy purposes.

Gregory.

§ 80. *Religion considered as exciting Devotion.*

The third view of religion considers it as engaging and interesting the affections, and comprehends the devotional or sentimental part of it.—The devotional spirit is in some measure constitutional, depending on liveliness of imagination and sensibility of heart, and, like these qualities, prevails more in warmer climates than it

does in ours. What shews its great dependence on the imagination, is the remarkable attachment it has to poetry and music, which Shakespeare calls the food of love, and which may, with equal truth, be called the food of devotion. Music enters into the future paradise of the devout of every sect and of every country. The Deity, viewed by the eye of cool reason, may be said, with great propriety, to dwell in light inaccessible. The mind, struck with the immensity of his being, and with a sense of its own littleness and unworthiness, admires with that distant awe and veneration that almost excludes love. But viewed by a devout imagination, he may become an object of the warmest affection, and even passion.—The philosopher contemplates the Deity in all those marks of wisdom and benignity diffused through the various works of nature. The devout man confines his views rather to his own particular connection with the Deity, the many instances of his goodness he himself has experienced, and the many greater he still hopes for. This establishes a kind of intercourse, which often interests the heart and passions in the deepest manner.

The devotional taste, like all other tastes, has had the hard fate to be condemned as a weakness, by all who are strangers to its joys and its influence. Too much and too frequent occasion has been given, to turn this subject into ridicule.—A heated and devout imagination, when not under the direction of a very sound understanding, is apt to run very wild, and is at the same time impatient to publish all its follies to the world.—The feelings of a devout heart should be mentioned with great reserve and delicacy, as they depend upon private experience, and certain circumstances of mind and situation, which the world can neither know nor judge of. But devotional writings, executed with judgment and taste, are not only highly useful, but to all who have a true sense of religion, peculiarly engaging. *Ibid.*

§ 81. *Advantages of Devotion.*

The devotional spirit, united to good sense and a cheerful temper, gives that steadiness to virtue, which it always wants when produced and supported by good natural dispositions only. It corrects and humanizes those constitutional vices, which it is not able entirely to subdue; and though it too often fails to render men perfectly virtuous, it preserves them from becoming

becoming utterly abandoned. It has, besides, the most favourable influence on all the passive virtues; it gives a softness and sensibility to the heart, and a mildness and gentleness to the manners; but above all, it produces an universal charity and love to mankind, however different in station, country, or religion. There is a sublime yet tender melancholy, almost the universal attendant on genius, which is too apt to degenerate into gloom and disgust with the world. Devotion is admirably calculated to soothe this disposition, by insensibly leading the mind, while it seems to indulge it, to those prospects which calm every murmur of discontent, and diffuse a cheerfulness over the darkest hours of human life.—Persons in the pride of high health and spirits, who are keen in the pursuits of pleasure, interest, or ambition, have either no ideas on this subject, or treat it as the enthusiasm of a weak mind. But this really shews great narrowness of understanding; a very little reflection and acquaintance with nature might teach them, on how precarious a foundation their boasted independence on religion is built; the thousand nameless accidents that may destroy it; and that though for some years they should escape these, yet that time must impair the greatest vigour of health and spirits, and deprive them of all those objects for which, at present, they think life only worth enjoying. It should seem, therefore, very necessary to secure some permanent object, some real support to the mind, to cheer the soul, when all others shall have lost their influence.—The greatest inconvenience, indeed, that attends devotion, is its taking such a vast hold of the affections, as sometimes threatens the extinguishing of every other active principle of the mind. For when the devotional spirit falls in with a melancholy temper, it is too apt to depress the mind entirely, to sink it to the weakest superstition, and to produce a total retirement and abstraction from the world, and all the duties of life.

Gregory.

§ 82. *The Difference between true and false Politeness.*

It is evident enough, that the moral and Christian duty, of preferring one another in honour, respects only social peace and charity, and terminates in the good and edification of our Christian brother. Its use is, to soften the minds of men, and to draw them from that savage rusticity, which engenders many vices, and discredits

the virtues themselves. But when men had experienced the benefit of this complying temper, and further saw the ends, not of charity only, but of self-interest, that might be answered by it; they considered no longer its just purpose and application, but stretched it to that officious sedulity, and extreme servility of adulation, which we too often observe and lament in polished life.

Hence, that infinite attention and consideration, which is so rigidly exacted, and so duly paid, in the commerce of the world: hence, that prostitution of mind, which leaves a man no will, no sentiment, no principle, no character; all which disappear under the uniform exhibition of good manners: hence, those insidious arts, those studied disguises, those obsequious flatteries, nay, those multiplied and nicely-varied forms of insinuation and address, the direct aim of which may be to acquire the fame of politeness and good-breeding, but the certain effect, to corrupt every virtue, to soothe every vanity, and to inflame every vice of the human heart.

These fatal mischiefs introduce themselves under the pretence and semblance of that humanity, which the scriptures encourage and enjoin: but the genuine virtue is easily distinguished from the counterfeit, and by the following plain signs.

True politeness is modest, unpretending, and generous. It appears as little as may be; and when it does a courtesy, would willingly conceal it. It chooses silently to forgo its own claims, not officiously to withdraw them. It engages a man to prefer his neighbour to himself, because he really esteems him; because he is tender of his reputation; because he thinks it more manly, more Christian, to descend a little himself than to degrade another. It respects, in a word, the credit and estimation of his neighbour.

The mimic of this amiable virtue, false politeness, is, on the other hand, ambitious, servile, timorous. It affects popularity: is solicitous to please, and to be taken notice of. The man of this character does not offer, but obtrude his civilities; because he would merit by this assiduity; because, in despair of winning regard by any worthier qualities, he would be sure to make the most of this; and lastly, because of all things, he would dread, by the omission of any punctilious observance, to give offence. In a word, this sort of politeness respects, for its immediate object, the

favour and consideration of our neighbour.

Again: the man who governs himself by the spirit of the Apostle's precept, expresses his preference of another in such a way as is worthy of himself; in all innocent compliances, in all honest civilities, in all decent and manly condescensions.

On the contrary, the man of the world, who rests in the letter of this command, is regardless of the means by which he conducts himself. He respects neither his own dignity, nor that of human nature. Truth, reason, virtue, all are equally betrayed by this supple impostor. He assents to the errors, though the most pernicious; he applauds the follies, though the most ridiculous, he soothes the vices, though the most flagrant, of other men. He never contradicts, though in the softest form of insinuation; he never disapproves, though by a respectful silence; he never condemns, though it be only by a good example. In short, he is solicitous for nothing, but by some studied devices to hide from others, and, if possible, to palliate to himself, the grossness of his illiberal adulation.

Lastly; we may be sure, that the ultimate ends for which these different objects are pursued, and by so different means, must also lie wide of each other.

Accordingly, the true polite man would, by all proper testimonies of respect, promote the credit and estimation of his neighbour; *because* he sees that, by this generous consideration of each other, the peace of the world is, in a good degree, preserved; *because* he knows that their mutual attentions prevent animosities, soften the fierceness of men's manners, and dispose them to all the offices of benevolence and charity; *because*, in a word, the interests of society are best served by this conduct; and *because* he understands it to be his duty to love his neighbour.

The falsely polite, on the contrary, are anxious, by all means whatever, to procure the favour and consideration of those they converse with; *because* they regard, ultimately, nothing more than their private interest; *because* they perceive, that their own selfish designs are best carried on by such practices: in a word, *because* they love themselves.

Thus we see, that genuine virtue consults the honour of others by worthy means, and for the noblest purposes; the counter-

feit solicits their favour by dishonest compliances, and for the basest end.

Hurd.

§ 83. On Religious Principles and Behaviour.

Religion is rather a matter of sentiment than reasoning. The important and interesting articles of faith are sufficiently plain. Fix your attention on these, and do not meddle with controversy. If you get into that, you plunge into a chaos, from which you will never be able to extricate yourselves. It spoils the temper, and, I suspect, has no good effect on the heart.

Avoid all books, and all conversation, that tend to shake your faith on those great points of religion, which should serve to regulate your conduct, and on which your hopes of future and eternal happiness depend.

Never indulge yourselves in ridicule on religious subjects; nor give countenance to it in others, by seeming diverted with what they say. This, to people of good breeding, will be a sufficient check.

I wish you to go no farther than the Scriptures for your religious opinions. Embrace those you find clearly revealed. Never perplex yourselves about such as you do not understand, but treat them with silent and becoming reverence.

I would advise you to read only such religious books as are addressed to the heart, such as inspire pious and devout affections, such as are proper to direct you in your conduct; and not such as tend to entangle you in the endless maze of opinions and systems.

Be punctual in the stated performance of your private devotions, morning and evening. If you have any sensibility or imagination, this will establish such an intercourse between you and the Supreme Being, as will be of infinite consequence to you in life. It will communicate an habitual cheerfulness to your temper, give a firmness and steadiness to your virtue, and enable you to go through all the vicissitudes of human life with propriety and dignity.

I wish you to be regular in your attendance on public worship, and in receiving the communion. Allow nothing to interrupt your public or private devotions, except the performance of some active duty in life, to which they should always give place.—In your behaviour at public wor-

ship,

ship, observe an exemplary attention and gravity.

That extreme strictness which I recommend to you in these duties, will be considered by many of your acquaintance as a superstitious attachment to forms; but in the advices I give you on this and other subjects, I have an eye to the spirit and manners of the age. There is a levity and dissipation in the present manners, a coldness and listlessness in whatever relates to religion, which cannot fail to infect you, unless you purposely cultivate in your minds a contrary bias, and make the devotional one habitual.

Gregory's Advice.

§ 84. *On the Beauties of the Psalms.*

Greatness confers no exemption from the cares and sorrows of life: its share of them frequently bears a melancholy proportion to its exaltation. This the Israelitish monarch experienced. He fought in piety, that peace which he could not find in empire, and alleviated the inquietudes of state, with the exercises of devotion. His invaluable Psalms convey those comforts to others, which they afforded to himself. Composed upon particular occasions, yet designed for general use: delivered out as services for Israelites under the Law, yet no less adapted to the circumstances of Christians under the Gospel; they present religion to us in the most engaging dress; communicating truths which philosophy could never investigate, in a style which poetry can never equal; while history is made the vehicle of prophecy, and creation lends all its charms to paint the glories of redemption. Calculated alike to profit and to please, they inform the understanding, elevate the affections, and entertain the imagination. Indited under the influence of Him, to whom all hearts are known, and all events foreknown, they suit mankind in all situations, grateful as the manna which descended from above, and conformed itself to every palate. The fairest productions of human wit, after a few perusals, like gathered flowers, wither in our hands, and lose their fragrancy; but these unfading plants of paradise become, as we are accustomed to them, still more and more beautiful; their bloom appears to be daily heightened; fresh odours are emitted, and new sweets extracted from them. He who hath once tasted their excellencies, will desire to taste them yet again; and he

who tastes them oftener, will relish them best.—And now, could the author flatter himself that any one would take half the pleasure in reading his work which he hath taken in writing it, he would not fear the loss of his labour. The employment detached him from the bustle and hurry of life, the din of politics, and the noise of folly; vanity and vexation flew away for a season, care and disquietude came not near his dwelling. He rose, fresh as the morning, to his task; the silence of the night invited him to pursue it; and he can truly say, that food and rest were not preferred before it. Every Psalm improved infinitely upon his acquaintance with it, and no one gave him uneasiness but the last; for then he grieved that his work was done. Happier hours than those which have been spent in these meditations on the songs of Sion, he never expects to see in this world. Very pleasantly did they pass, and moved smoothly and swiftly along; for when thus engaged, he counted no time. They are gone, but have left a relish and a fragrance upon the mind, and the remembrance of them is sweet. *Horns.*

§ 85. *The Temple of virtuous Love.*

The structure on the right hand was (as I afterwards found) consecrated to virtuous Love, and could not be entered, but by such as received a ring, or some other token, from a person who was placed as a guard at the gate of it. He wore a garland of roses and myrtles on his head, and on his shoulders a robe like an imperial mantle white and unspotted all over, excepting only, that where it was clasped at his breast, there were two golden turtle doves that buttoned it by their bills, which were wrought in rubies: he was called by the name of Hymen, and was seated near the entrance of the temple, in a delicious bower, made up of several trees that were embraced by woodbines, jessamines, and amaranths, which were as so many emblems of marriage, and ornaments to the trunks that supported them. As I was single and unaccompanied, I was not permitted to enter the temple, and for that reason am a stranger to all the mysteries that were performed in it. I had, however, the curiosity to observe, how the several couples that entered were disposed of; which was after the following manner: there were two great gates on the backside of the edifice, at which the whole crowd was let out. At one of these gates

were two women, extremely beautiful, though in a different kind; the one having a very careful and composed air, the other a sort of smile and ineffable sweetness in her countenance: the name of the first was Discretion, and of the other Complacency. All who came out of this gate, and put themselves under the direction of these two sisters, were immediately conducted by them into gardens, groves, and meadows, which abounded in delights, and were furnished with every thing that could make them the proper seats of happiness. The second gate of this temple let out all the couples that were unhappily married; who came out linked together by chains, which each of them strove to break, but could not. Several of these were such as had never been acquainted with each other before they met in the great walk, or had been too well acquainted in the thicket. The entrance to this gate was possessed by three sisters, who joined themselves with these wretches, and occasioned most of their miseries. The youngest of the sisters was known by the name of Levity; who, with the innocence of a virgin, had the dress and behaviour of a harlot: the name of the second was Contentment, who bore on her right arm a muff made of the skin of a porcupine, and on her left carried a little lap-dog, that barked and snapped at every one that passed by her. The eldest of the sisters, who seemed to have an haughty and imperious air, was always accompanied with a tawny Cupid, who generally marched before her with a little mace on his shoulder, the end of which was fashioned into the horns of a stag: her garments were yellow, and her complexion pale: her eyes were piercing, but had odd casts in them, and that particular distemper which makes persons who are troubled with it see objects double. Upon enquiry, I was informed that her name was Jealousy.

Tatler.

§ 86. *The Temple of Lust.*

Having finished my observations upon this temple, and its votaries, I repaired to that which stood on the left hand, and was called the temple of Lust. The front of it was raised on Corinthian pillars, with all the meretricious ornaments that accompany that order; whereas that of the other was composed of the chaste and matron-like Ionic. The sides of it were adorned with several grotesque figures of goats,

sparrows, heathen gods, satyrs, and monsters, made up of half men, half beast. The gates were unguarded, and open to all that had a mind to enter. Upon my going in, I found the windows were blinded, and let in only a kind of twilight, that served to discover a prodigious number of dark corners and apartments, into which the whole temple was divided. I was here stunned with a mixed noise of clamour and jollity: on one side of me I heard singing and dancing; on the other, brawls and clashing of swords: in short, I was so little pleased with the place, that I was going out of it: but found I could not return by the gate where I entered, which was barred against all that were come in, with bolts of iron and locks of adamant; there was no going back from this temple through the paths of pleasure which led to it: all who passed through the ceremonies of the place, went out at an iron wicket, which was kept by a dreadful giant called Remorse, that held a scourge of scorpions in his hand, and drove them into the only outlet from that temple. This was a passage so rugged, so uneven, and choaked with so many thorns and briars, that it was a melancholy spectacle to behold the pains and difficulties which both sexes suffered who walked through it: the men, though in the prime of their youth, appeared weak and enfeebled with old age: the women wrung their hands, and tore their hair, and several lost their limbs, before they could extricate themselves out of the perplexities of the path in which they were engaged.—The remaining part of this vision, and the adventures I met with in the two great roads of Ambition and Avarice must be the subject of another paper.

Ibid.

§ 87. *The Temple of Virtue.*

With much labour and difficulty I passed through the first part of my vision, and recovered the centre of the wood, from whence I had the prospect of the three great roads. I here joined myself to the middle-aged party of mankind, who marched behind the standard of Ambition. The great road lay in a direct line, and was terminated by the temple of Virtue. It was planted on each side with laurels, which were intermixed with marble trophies, carved pillars, and statues of lawgivers, heroes, statesmen, philosophers, and poets. The persons who travelled up this great path, were such whose thoughts

were

were bent upon doing eminent services to mankind, or promoting the good of their country. On each side of this great road, were several paths that were also laid out in straight lines, and ran parallel with it; these were most of them covered walks, and received into them men of retired virtue, who proposed to themselves the same end of their journey, though they chose to make it in shade and obscurity. The edifices, at the extremity of the walk, were so contrived, that we could not see the temple of Honour, by reason of the temple of Virtue, which stood before it: at the gates of this temple, we were met by the goddess of it, who conducted us into that of Honour, which was joined to the other edifice by a beautiful triumphal arch, and had no other entrance into it. When the deity of the inner structure had received us, she presented us in a body, to a figure that was placed over the high altar, and was the emblem of Eternity. She sat on a globe, in the midst of a golden zodiac, holding the figure of a sun in one hand, and a moon in the other: her head was veiled, and her feet covered. Our hearts glowed within us, as we stood amidst the sphere of light which this image cast on every side of it.

Tartler.

§ 88. *The Temple of Vanity.*

Having seen all that happened to the band of adventurers, I repaired to another pile of buildings that stood within view of the temple of Honour, and was raised in imitation of it, upon the very same model; but, at my approach to it, I found that the stones were laid together without mortar, and that the whole fabric stood upon so weak a foundation, that it shook with every wind that blew. This was called the Temple of Vanity. The goddess of it sat in the midst of a great many tapers, that burned day and night, and made her appear much better than she would have done in open day-light. Her whole art was to shew herself more beautiful and majestic than she really was. For which reason she had painted her face, and wore a cluster of false jewels upon her breast: but what I more particularly observed, was the breadth of her petticoat, which was made altogether in the fashion of a modern fardingal. This place was filled with hypocrites, pedants, free-thinkers, and prating politicians, with a rabble of those who have only titles to make them great men. Female votaries crowded the tem-

ple, choaked up the avenues of it, and were more in number than the sand upon the sea-shore. I made it my business, in my return towards that part of the wood from whence I first set out, to observe the walks which led to this temple; for I met in it several who had begun their journey with the band of virtuous persons, and travelled some time in their company: but, upon examination, I found that there were several paths, which led out of the great road into the sides of the wood, and ran into so many crooked turns and windings, that those who travelled through them, often turned their backs upon the temple of Virtue, then crossed the straight road, and sometimes marched in it for a little space, till the crooked path which they were engaged in again led them into the wood. The several alleys of these wanderers, had their particular ornaments: one of them I could not but take notice of, in the walk of the mischievous pretenders to politics, which had at every turn the figure of a person, whom, by the inscription, I found to be Machiavel, pointing out the way, with an extended finger, like a Mercury. *Ibid.*

§ 89. *The Temple of Avarice.*

I was now returned in the same manner as before, with a design to observe carefully every thing that passed in the region of Avarice, and the occurrences in that assembly, which was made up of persons of my own age. This body of travellers had not gone far in the third great road, before it led them insensibly into a deep valley, in which they journied several days with great toil and uneasiness, and without the necessary refreshments of food and sleep. The only relief they met with, was in a river that ran through the bottom of the valley on a bed of golden sand: they often drank of this stream, which had such a particular quality in it, that though it refreshed them for a time, it rather inflamed than quenched their thirst. On each side of the river was a range of hills full of precious ore; for where the rains had washed off the earth, one might see in several parts of them long veins of gold, and rocks that looked like pure silver. We were told that the deity of the place had forbid any of his votaries to dig into the bowels of these hills, or convert the treasures they contained to any use, under pain of starving. At the end of the valley stood the temple of Avarice, made after

the manner of a fortification, and surrounded with a thousand triple-headed dogs, that were placed there to keep off beggars. At our approach they all fell a barking, and would have much terrified us, had not an old woman, who had called herself by the forged name of Competency, offered herself for our guide. She carried under her garment a golden bow, which she no sooner held up in her hand, but the dogs lay down, and the gates flew open for our reception. We were led through an hundred iron doors before we entered the temple. At the upper end of it, sat the god of Avarice, with a long filthy beard, and a meagre starved countenance, inclosed with heaps of ingots and pyramids of money, but half naked and shivering with cold: on his right hand was a fiend called Rapine, and on his left a particular favourite, to whom he had given the title of Parsimony; the first was his collector, and the other his cashier. There were several long tables placed on each side of the temple, with respective officers attending behind them: some of these, I enquired into: at the first table was kept the office of Corruption. Seeing a solicitor extremely busy, and whispering every body that passed by, I kept my eye upon him very attentively, and saw him often going up to a person that had a pen in his hand, with a multiplication-table and an almanack before him, which, as I afterwards heard, was all the learning he was master of. The solicitor would often apply himself to his ear, and at the same time convey money into his hand, for which the other would give him out a piece of paper, or parchment, signed and sealed in form. The name of this dexterous and successful solicitor was Bribery. At the next table was the office of Extortion: behind it sat a person in a bob-wig, counting over a great sum of money: he gave out little purses to several, who, after a short tour, brought him, in return, sacks full of the same kind of coin. Now, at the same time, a person called Fraud, who sat behind the counter, with false scales, light weights, and scanty measures; by the skilful application of which instruments, she had got together an immense heap of wealth; it would be endless to name the several officers, or describe the votaries that attended in this temple; there were many old men, pattering and breathless, depositing their heads on

bags of money; many many of them actually dying, whose very pangs and convulsions (which rendered their purses useless to them) only made them grasp them the faster. There were some tearing with one hand all things, even to the garments and flesh of many miserable persons who stood before them; and with the other hand throwing away what they had seized, to harlots, flatterers, and panders, that stood behind them. On a sudden the whole assembly fell a trembling; and, upon enquiry, I found that the great room we were in was haunted with a spectre, that many times a day appeared to them, and terrified them to distraction. In the midst of their terror and amazement, the apparition entered, which I immediately knew to be Poverty. Whether it were by my acquaintance with this phantom, which had rendered the sight of her more familiar to me, or however it was, she did not make so indigent or frightful a figure in my eye, as the god of this loathsome temple. The miserable votaries of this place were, I found, of another mind: every one fancied himself threatened by the apparition as she stalked about the room, and began to lock their coffers, and tie their bags, with the utmost fear and trembling. I must confess, I look upon the passion which I saw in this unhappy people, to be of the same nature with those unaccountable antipathies which some persons are born with, or rather as a kind of phrenzy, not unlike that which throws a man into terrors and agonies at the sight of so useful and innocent a thing as water. The whole assembly was surprized, when, instead of paying my devotions to the deity whom they all adored, they saw me address myself to the phantom. "Oh! Poverty! (said I) my first petition to thee is, that thou wouldest never appear to me hereafter; but if thou wilt not grant me this, that thou wouldest not bear a form more terrible than that in which thou appearest to me at present. Let not thy threats or menaces betray me to any thing that is ungrateful or unjust. Let me not shut my ears to the cries of the needy. Let me not forget the person that has deserved well of me. Let me not, from any fear of Thee, desert my friend, my principles, or my honour. If Wealth is to visit me, and come with her usual attendants, Vanity and Avarice, do thou, O Poverty! hasten to my rescue; but bring along with Thee thy

thy two sisters, in whose company thou art always chearful, Liberty and Innocence."

Tatler.

§ 90. *The Virtue of Gentleness not to be confounded with artificial and insincere Politeness.*

Gentleness corrects whatever is offensive in our manners; and, by a constant train of humane attentions, studies to alleviate the burden of common misery. Its office, therefore, is extensive. It is not, like some other virtues, called forth only on peculiar emergencies: but it is continually in action, when we are engaged in intercourse with men. It ought to form our address, to regulate our speech, and to diffuse itself over our whole behaviour.

I must warn you, however, not to confound this gentle wisdom which is from above, with that artificial courtesy, that studied smoothness of manners, which is learned in the school of the world. Such accomplishments the most frivolous and empty may possess. Too often they are employed by the artful, as a snare: too often affected by the hard and unfeeling, as a cover to the baseness of their minds. We cannot, at the same time, avoid observing the homage which, even in such instances, the world is constrained to pay to virtue. In order to render society agreeable, it is found necessary to assume somewhat that may at least carry its appearance; Virtue is the universal charm; even its shadow is courted, when the substance is wanting: the imitation of its form has been reduced into an art; and, in the commerce of life, the first study of all who would either gain the esteem, or win the hearts of others, is to learn the speech, and to adopt the manners of candour, gentleness, and humanity; but that gentleness which is the characteristic of a good man, has, like every other virtue, its seat in the heart; and, let me add, nothing except what flows from it, can render even external manners truly pleasing; for no assumed behaviour can at all times hide the real character. In that unaffected civility which springs from a gentle mind, there is a charm infinitely more powerful than in all the studied manners of the most finished courtier.

Blair.

§ 91. *Opportunities for great Acts of Beneficence rare, for Gentleness continual.*

But, perhaps, it will be pleaded by some,

That this gentleness on which we now insist, regards only those smaller offices of life, which, in their eyes, are not essential to religion and goodness. Negligent, they confess, on slight occasions, of the government of their temper, or the regulation of their behaviour, they are attentive, as they pretend, to the great duties of beneficence; and ready, whenever the opportunity presents, to perform important services to their fellow-creatures. But let such persons reflect, that the occasions of performing those important good deeds very rarely occur. Perhaps their situation in life, or the nature of their connections, may, in a great measure, exclude them from such opportunities. Great events give scope for great virtues; but the main tenor of human life is composed of small occurrences. Within the round of these, lie the materials of the happiness of most men; the subjects of their duty, and the trials of their virtue. Virtue must be formed and supported, not by unfrequent acts, but by daily and repeated exertions. In order to its becoming either vigorous or useful, it must be habitually active; not breaking forth occasionally with a transient lustre, like the blaze of the comet; but regular in its returns, like the light of the day; not like the aromatic gale, which sometimes feasts the sense; but, like the ordinary breeze, which purifies the air, and renders it healthful.

Years may pass over our heads, without affording any opportunity for acts of high beneficence, or extensive utility. Whereas, not a day passes, but in the common transactions of life, and especially in the intercourse of domestic society, gentleness finds place for promoting the happiness of others, and for strengthening in ourselves, the habit of virtue. Nay, by seasonable discoveries of a humane spirit, we sometimes contribute more materially to the advancement of happiness, than by actions which are seemingly more important. There are situations, not a few, in human life, where the encouraging reception, the condescending behaviour, and the look of sympathy, bring greater relief to the heart, than the most bountiful gift: while, on the other side, when the hand of liberality is extended to bestow, the want of gentleness is sufficient to frustrate the intention of the benefit; we sour those whom we meant to oblige; and, by conferring favours with ostentation and harshness, we convert them into injuries. Can any disposition, then

be held to possess a low place in the scale of virtue, whose influence is so considerable on the happiness of the world.

Gentleness is, in truth, the great avenue to mutual enjoyment. Amidst the strife of interfering interests, it tempers the violence of contention, and keeps alive the seeds of harmony. It softens animosities, renews endearments, and renders the countenance of a man, a refreshment to a man. Banish gentleness from the earth; suppose the world to be filled with none but harsh and contentious spirits, and what sort of society would remain? the solitude of the desert were preferable to it. The conflict of jarring elements in chaos; the cave, where subterraneous winds contend and roar; the den, where serpents hiss, and beasts of the forest howl; would be the only proper representations of such assemblies of men.—Strange! that where men have all one common interest, they should so often absurdly concur in defeating it! Has not nature already provided a sufficient quantity of unavoidable evils for the state of man? As if we did not suffer enough from the storm which beats upon us without, must we conspire also, in those societies where we assemble, in order to find a retreat from that storm, to harass one another? *Blair.*

§ 92. *Gentleness recommended on Considerations of our own Interest.*

But if the sense of duty, and of common happiness, be insufficient to recommend the virtue of gentleness, then let me desire you to consider your own interest. Whatever ends a good man can be supposed to pursue, gentleness will be found to favour them; it prepossesses and wins every heart; it persuades, when every other argument fails; often disarms the fierce, and melts the stubborn. Whereas, harshness confirms the opposition it would subdue; and, of an indifferent person, creates an enemy. He who could overlook an injury committed in the collision of interests, will long and severely resent the slights of a contemptuous behaviour. To the man of gentleness, the world is generally disposed to ascribe every other good quality. The higher endowments of the mind we admire at a distance, and when any impropriety of behaviour accompanies them, we admire without love: they are like some of the distant stars, whose beneficial influence reaches not to us. Whereas, of the in-

fluence of gentleness, all in some degree partake, and therefore all love it. The man of this character rises in the world without struggle, and flourishes without envy. His misfortunes are universally lamented; and his failings are easily forgiven.

But whatever may be the effect of this virtue on our external condition, its influence on our internal enjoyment is certain and powerful. That inward tranquillity which it promotes, is the first requisite to every pleasurable feeling. It is the calm and clear atmosphere, the serenity and sunshine of the mind. When benignity and gentleness reign within, we are always least in hazard of being ruffled from without; every person, and every occurrence, are beheld in the most favourable light. But let some clouds of disgust and ill-humour gather on the mind, and immediately the scene changes: Nature seems transformed; and the appearance of all things is blackened to our view. The gentle mind is like the smooth stream, which reflects every object in its just proportion, and in its fairest colours. The violent spirit, like troubled waters, renders back the images of things distorted and broken; and communicates to them all that disordered motion which arises solely from its own agitation. *Ibid.*

§ 93. *The Man of gentle Manners is superior to frivolous Offences and slight Provocations.*

As soon may the waves of the sea cease to roll, as provocations to arise from human corruption and frailty. Attacked by great injuries, the man of mild and gentle spirit will feel what human nature feels; and will defend and resent, as his duty allows him. But to those slight provocations, and frivolous offences, which are the most frequent causes of disquiet, he is happily superior. Hence his days flow in a far more placid tenor than those of others; exempted from the numberless discomposures which agitate vulgar minds, inspired with higher sentiments; taught to regard, with indulgent eye, the frailties of men, the omissions of the careless, the follies of the imprudent, and the levity of the fickle, he retreats into the calmness of his spirit, as into an undisturbed sanctuary; and quietly allows the usual current of life to hold its course. *Ibid.*

§ 94. *Pride fills the World with Harshness and Severity.*

Let me advise you to view your character with an impartial eye; and to learn, from your own failings, to give that indulgence which in your turn you claim. It is pride which fills the world with so much harshness and severity. In the fulness of self-estimation, we forget what we are, we claim attentions to which we are not entitled. We are rigorous to offences, as if we had never offended; unfeeling to distress, as if we knew not what it was to suffer. From those airy regions of pride and folly, let us descend to our proper level. Let us survey the natural equality on which Providence has placed man with man, and reflect on the infirmities common to all. If the reflection on natural equality and mutual offences be insufficient to prompt humanity, let us at least consider what we are in the sight of God. Have we none of that forbearance to give one another, which we all so earnestly entreat from Heaven? Can we look for clemency or gentleness from our Judge, when we are so backward to shew it to our own brethren? *Blair.*

§ 95. *Violence and Contention often caused by Trifles and imaginary Mischiefs.*

Accustom yourselves, also, to reflect on the small moment of those things which are the usual incentives to violence and contention. In the ruffled and angry hour, we view every appearance through a false medium. The most inconsiderable point of interest or honour, swells into a momentous object; and the slightest attack seems to threaten immediate ruin. But after passion or pride has subsided, we look round in vain for the mighty mischiefs we dreaded: the fabric, which our disturbed imagination had reared, totally disappears. But though the cause of contention has dwindled away, its consequences remain. We have alienated a friend; we have embittered an enemy; we have sown the seeds of future suspicion, malevolence, or disgust—Suspend your violence, I beseech you, for a moment, when causes of discord occur. Anticipate that period of coolness, which, of itself, will soon arrive. Allow yourselves to think, how little you have any prospect of gaining by fierce contention; but how much of the true happiness of life you are certain of throwing away. Easily, and from the smallest chink, the bitter

waters of strife are let forth; but their course cannot be foreseen; and he seldom fails of suffering most from the poisonous effect, who first allowed them to flow.

Ibid.

§ 96. *Gentleness best promoted by religious Views.*

But gentleness will, most of all, be promoted by frequent views of those great objects which our holy religion presents. Let the prospects of immortality fill your minds. Look upon this world as a state of passage. Consider yourselves as engaged in the pursuit of higher interests; as acting now, under the eye of God, an introductory part to a more important scene. Elevated by such sentiments, your minds will become calm and sedate. You will look down, as from a superior station, on the petty disturbances of the world. They are the selfish, the sensual, and the vain, who are most subject to the impotence of passion. They are linked so closely to the world; by so many sides they touch every object, and every person around them, that they are perpetually hurt, and perpetually hurting others. But the spirit of true religion removes us to a proper distance from the grating objects of worldly contentions. It leaves us sufficiently connected with the world, for acting our part in it with propriety; but disengages us from it so far, as to weaken its power of disturbing our tranquillity. It inspires magnanimity; and magnanimity always breathes gentleness. It leads us to view the follies of men with pity, not with rancour; and to treat, with the mildness of a superior nature, what in little minds would call forth all the bitterness of passion. *Ibid.*

§ 97. *Gentleness to be assumed, as the Ornament of every Age and Station; but to be distinguished from polished or affected Manners.*

Aided by such considerations, let us cultivate that gentle wisdom which is, in so many respects, important both to our duty and our happiness. Let us assume it as the ornament of every age, and of every station. Let it temper the petulance of youth, and soften the moroseness of old age. Let it mitigate authority in those who rule, and, promote deference among those who obey. I conclude with repeating the caution, not to mistake for true gentleness, that flimsy imitation of it, called polished manners, which often, among the

them of the world; under a smooth appearance, conceals much asperity. Let yours be native gentleness of heart, flowing from the love of God, and the love of man. Unite this amiable spirit, with a proper zeal for all that is right, and just, and true. Let piety be combined in your character with humanity. Let determined integrity dwell in a mild and gentle breast. A character thus supported, will command more real respect than can be procured by the most shining accomplishments, when separated from virtue. *Blair.*

§ 98. *The Stings of Poverty, Disease, and Violence, less pungent than those of guilty Passions.*

Assemble all the evils which poverty, disease, or violence can inflict, and their stings will be found, by far, less pungent than those which guilty passions dart into the heart. Amidst the ordinary calamities of the world, the mind can exert its powers, and suggest relief: and the mind is properly the man; the sufferer, and his sufferings, can be distinguished. But those disorders of passion, by seizing directly on the mind, attack human nature in its strong hold, and cut off its last resource. They penetrate to the very seat of sensation; and convert all the powers of thought into instruments of torture. *Ibid.*

§ 99. *The Balance of Happiness equal.*

An extensive contemplation of human affairs, will lead us to this conclusion; that among the different conditions and ranks of men, the balance of happiness is preserved in a great measure equal; and that the high and the low, the rich and the poor, approach, in point of real enjoyment, much nearer to each other, than is commonly imagined. In the lot of man, mutual compensations, both of pleasure and of pain, universally take place. Providence never intended, that any state here should be either completely happy, or entirely miserable. If the feelings of pleasure are more numerous, and more lively, in the higher departments of life, such also are those of pain. If greatness flatters our vanity, it multiplies our dangers. If opulence increases our gratifications, it increases, in the same proportion, our desires and demands. If the poor are confined to a more narrow circle, yet within that circle lie most of those natural satisfactions which, after all the refinements of art, are found

to be the most genuine and true.—In a state, therefore, where there is neither so much to be coveted on the one hand, nor to be dreaded on the other, as at first appears, how submissive ought we to be to the disposal of Providence! How temperate in our desires and pursuits! How much more attentive to preserve our virtue, and to improve our minds, than to gain the doubtful and equivocal advantages of worldly prosperity! *Ibid.*

§ 100. *The truest Misery arises from the Passions of Man in his present fallen and disturbed Condition.*

From this train of observation, can one avoid reflecting upon the disorder in which human nature plainly appears at present to lie? We behold, in Haman, the picture of that misery, which arises from evil passions; of that unhappiness, which is incident to the highest prosperity; of that discontent, which is common to every state. Whether we consider him as a bad man, a prosperous man, or simply as a man, in every light we behold reason too weak for passion. This is the source of the reigning evil; this is the root of the universal disease. The story of Haman only shews us, what human nature has too generally appeared to be in every age. Hence, when we read the history of nations, what do we read but the history of the follies and crimes of men? We may dignify those recorded transactions, by calling them the intrigues of statesmen, and the exploits of conquerors; but they are, in truth, no other than the efforts of discontent to escape from its misery, and the struggles of contending passions among unhappy men. The history of mankind has ever been a continued tragedy; the world, a great theatre, exhibiting the same repeated scene, of the follies of men shooting forth into guilt, and of their passions fermenting, by a quick process, into misery. *Ibid.*

§ 101. *Our Nature to be restored by using the Assistance of Revelation.*

But can we believe, that the nature of man came forth in this state from the hands of its gracious Creator? Did he frame this world, and store it with inhabitants, solely that it might be replenished with crimes and misfortunes!—In the moral, as well as in the natural world, we may plainly discern the signs of some violent corruption, which has shattered the original

ginal workmanship of the Almighty. Amidst this wreck of human nature, traces still remain which indicate its author. Those high powers of conscience and reason, that capacity for happiness, that ardour of enterprise, that glow of affection, which often break through the gloom of human vanity and guilt, are like the scattered columns, the broken arches, and defaced sculptures of some fallen temple, whose ancient splendour appears amidst its ruins. So conspicuous in human nature are those characters, both of a high origin and of a degraded state, that, by many religious sects throughout the earth, they have been seen and confessed. A tradition seems to have pervaded almost all nations, that the human race had either, through some offence, forfeited, or, through some misfortune, lost, that station of primeval honour, which they once possessed. But while, from this doctrine, ill understood, and involved in many fabulous tales, the nations wandering in Pagan darkness could draw no consequences that were just; while, totally ignorant of the nature of the disease, they sought in vain for the remedy; the same divine revelation, which has informed us in what manner our apostacy arose, from the abuse of our rational powers, has instructed us also how we may be restored to virtue and to happiness.

Let us, therefore, study to improve the assistance which this revelation affords, for the restoration of our nature and the recovery of our felicity. With humble and grateful minds, let us apply to those medicinal springs which it hath opened, for curing the disorders of our hearts and passions. In this view, let us, with reverence, look up to that Divine Personage, who descended into the world, on purpose to be the light and the life of men: who came, in the fulness of grace and truth, to repair the desolations of many generations, to restore order among the works of God, and to raise up a new earth, and new heavens, wherein righteousness should dwell for ever. Under his tuition let us put ourselves; and amidst the storms of passion to which we are here exposed, and the slippery paths which we are left to tread, never trust presumptuously to our own understanding. Thankful that a heavenly conductor vouchsafes his aid, let us earnestly pray, that from him may descend divine light to guide our steps, and divine strength to fortify our minds. Let us pray, that his grace may keep us from all

intemperate passions, and mistaken pursuits of pleasure, that whether it shall be his will, to give or to deny us earthly prosperity, he may bless us with a calm, a sound, and well-regulated mind; may give us moderation in success,* and fortitude under disappointment; and may enable us so to take warning from the crimes and miseries of others, as to escape the snares of guilt. *Blair.*

§ 102. *The Happiness of every Man depends more upon the State of his own Mind, than upon any external Circumstance whatever.*

While we thus maintain a due dependence on God, let us also exert ourselves with care, in acting our own part. From the whole of what has been said, this important instruction arises, that the happiness of every man depends more upon the state of his own mind, than upon any one external circumstance; nay, more than upon all external things put together. We have seen, that inordinate passions are the great disturbers of life; and that unless we possess a good conscience, and a well-governed mind, discontent will blast every enjoyment, and the highest prosperity will prove only disguised misery. Fix then this conclusion in your minds, that the destruction of your virtue is the destruction of your peace. Keep thy heart with all diligence; govern it with the greatest care; for out of it are the issues of life. In no station, in no period, think yourselves secure from the dangers which spring from your passions. Every age, and every station, they beset; from youth to grey hairs, and from the peasant to the prince. *Ibid.*

§ 103. *At first setting out in Life, beware of seducing Appearances.*

At your first setting out in life especially, when yet unacquainted with the world and its snares, when every pleasure enchants with its smile, and every object shines with the gloss of novelty; beware of the seducing appearances which surround you, and recollect what others have suffered from the power of headstrong desire. If you allow any passion, even though it be esteemed innocent, to acquire an absolute ascendancy, your inward peace will be impaired. But if any which has the taint of guilt, take early possession of your mind; you may date from that moment the ruin of your tranquillity.—Not with

with the season of youth does the peril end. To the impetuosity of youthful desire, succeed the more sober, but no less dangerous, attachments of advancing years; when the passions which are connected with interest and ambition begin their reign, and too frequently extend their malignant influence, even over those periods of life which ought to be most tranquil. From the first to the last of man's abode on earth, the discipline must never be relaxed, of guarding the heart from the dominion of passion. Eager passions, and violent desires, were not made for man. They exceed his sphere: they find no adequate objects on earth; and of course can be productive of nothing but misery. The certain consequence of indulging them is, that there shall come an evil day, when the anguish of disappointment shall drive us to acknowledge, that all which we enjoy availeth us nothing.

Blair.

§ 104. *Enthusiasm less pernicious to the Mind, than Coldness and Indifference in Religion.*

But whatever absurdities may arise from the fancied ardours of enthusiasm, they are much less pernicious than the contrary extreme of coldness and indifference in religion. The spirit of chivalry, though it led to many romantic enterprizes, was nevertheless favourable to true courage, as it excited and nourished magnanimity and contempt of danger; which, though sometimes wasted in absurd undertakings, were of the greatest use on real and proper occasions. The noblest energies of which we are capable, can scarcely be called out without some degree of enthusiasm, in whatever cause we are engaged; and those sentiments which tend to the exaltation of human nature, though they may often excite attempts beyond the human powers, will, however, prevent our stopping short of them, and losing, by careless indolence and self-desertion, the greatest part of that strength with which we really are endowed.

How common is it for those who profess (and perhaps sincerely) to believe with entire persuasion the truth of the gospel, to declare that they do not pretend to frame their lives according to the purity of its moral precepts! "I hope," say they, "I am guilty of no great crimes: but the customs of the world in these times will not admit of a conduct agreeable either

"to reason or revelation. I know the course of life I am in is wrong; I know that I am engrossed by the world—that I have no time for reflection, nor for the practice of many duties which I acknowledge to be such. But I know not how it is—I do not find that I can alter my way of living."—Thus they coolly and contentedly give themselves up to a constant course of dissipation, and a general worthlessness of character, which, I fear, is as little favourable to their happiness here or hereafter, as the occasional commission of crimes at which they would start and tremble. The habitual neglect of all that is most valuable and important, of children, friends, servants—of neighbours and dependants—of the poor—of God—and of their own minds, they consider as an excusable levity, and satisfy themselves with laying the blame on the manners of the times.

If a modern lady of fashion was to be called to account for the disposition of her time, I imagine her defence would run in this style:—"I can't, you know, be out of the world, nor act differently from every body in it. The hours are every where late—consequently I rise late. I have scarce breakfasted before morning visits begin, or 'tis time to go to an auction, or a concert, or to take a little exercise for my health. Dressing my hair is a long operation, but one can't appear with a head unlike every body else. One must sometimes go to a play, or an opera; though I own it hurries one to death. Then what with necessary visits—the perpetual engagements to card-parties at private houses—and attendance on public assemblies, to which all people of fashion subscribe, the evenings, you see, are fully disposed of. What time then can I possibly have for what you call domestic duties?—You talk of the offices and enjoyments of friendship—alas! I have no hours left for friends! I must see them in a crowd, or not at all. As to cultivating the friendship of my husband, we are very civil when we meet: but we are both too much engaged to spend much time with each other. With regard to my daughters, I have given them a French governess, and proper masters—I can do no more for them. You tell me, I should instruct my servants—but I have not time to inform myself, much less can I undertake any thing of that

"that sort for them, or even be able to
 "guess what they do with themselves the
 "greatest part of the twenty-four hours.
 "I go to church, if possible, once on a
 "Sunday, and then some of my servants
 "attend me; and if they will not mind
 "what the preacher says, how can I help
 "it?—The management of our fortune,
 "as far as I am concerned, I must leave
 "to the steward and housekeeper; for I
 "find I can barely snatch a quarter of an
 "hour just to look over the bill of fare
 "when I am to have company, that they
 "may not send up any thing frightful or
 "old-fashioned—As to the Christian duty
 "of charity, I assure you I am not ill-
 "natured; and (considering that the great
 "expence of being always drest for com-
 "pany, with losses at cards, subscriptions,
 "and public spectacles, leave me very
 "little to dispose of) I am ready enough
 "to give my money when I meet with a
 "miserable object. You say I should en-
 "quire out such, inform myself thoroughly
 "of their cases, make an acquaintance
 "with the poor of my neighbourhood in
 "the country, and plan out the best
 "methods of relieving the unfortunate
 "and assisting the industrious. But this
 "supposes much more time, and much
 "more money, than I have to bestow.—I
 "have had hopes indeed that my summers
 "would have afforded me more leisure;
 "but we stay pretty late in town; then
 "we generally pass several weeks at one
 "or other of the water-drinking places,
 "where every moment is spent in public;
 "and, for the few months in which we
 "reside at our own seat, our house is
 "always full, with a succession of com-
 "pany, to whose amusement one is obliged
 "to dedicate every hour of the day."

So here ends the account of that time
 which was given you to prepare and edu-
 cate yourself for eternity?—Yet you be-
 lieve the immortality of the soul, and a
 future state of rewards and punishments.
 Ask your own heart what rewards you de-
 serve, or what kind of felicity you are fitted
 to enjoy?—Which of those faculties or
 affections, which heaven can be supposed
 to gratify, have you cultivated and im-
 proved?—If, in that eternal world, the
 stores of knowledge should be laid open
 before you, have you preserved that thirst
 of knowledge, or that taste for truth,
 which is now to be indulged with endless
 information?—If, in the society of saints
 and angels, the purest benevolence and

most cordial love is to constitute your hap-
 piness, where is the heart which should en-
 joy this delightful intercourse of affection?
 —Has your's been exercised and refined
 to a proper capacity of it during your
 state of discipline, by the energies of
 generous friendship, by the meltings of
 parental fondness, or by that union of heart
 and soul, that mixed exertion of perfect
 friendship and ineffable tenderness, which
 approaches nearest to the full satisfaction
 of our nature, in the bands of conjugal
 love?—Alas! you scarce knew you had a
 heart, except when you felt it swell with
 pride, or flutter with vanity!—Has your
 piety and gratitude to the Source of all
 Good, been exercised and strengthened by
 constant acts of praise and thanksgiving?
 Was it nourished by frequent meditation,
 and silent recollection of all the wonders
 he hath done for us, till it burst forth in fer-
 vent prayer?—I fear it was rather decency
 than devotion, that carried you once a
 week to the place of public worship—and
 for the rest of the week, your thoughts and
 time were so very differently filled up,
 that the idea of a Ruler of the universe
 could occur but seldom, and then, rather
 as an object of terror, than of hope and
 joy. How then shall a soul so dead to
 divine love, so lost to all but the most
 childish pursuits, be able to exalt and en-
 large itself to a capacity of that bliss which
 we are allowed to hope for, in a more in-
 timate perception of the divine presence,
 in contemplating more nearly the per-
 fections of our Creator, and in pouring
 out before his throne our ardent gratitude,
 love, and adoration?—What kind of train-
 ing is the life you have passed through,
 for such an immortality?

And dare you look down with contempt
 on those whom strong temptation from na-
 tural passions, or a train of unfortunate
 circumstances, have sunk into the com-
 mission of what you call great crimes?—
 Dare you speak peace to your own heart,
 because by different circumstances you
 have been preserved from them?—Far be
 it from me to wish to lessen the horror of
 crimes; but yet, as the temptations to
 these occur but seldom, whereas the temp-
 tations to neglect, and indifference towards
 our duty, for ever surround us, it may be
 necessary to awaken ourselves to some
 calculation of the proportions between such
 habitual omission of all that is good, and
 the commission of more heinous acts of sin;
 between wasting our own life in what is

falsely

falsely called innocent amusement, and disgracing it by faults which would alarm society more, though possibly they might injure it less.

Mrs. Chapone.

§ 105. *Of the Difference between the Extreme of Negligence and Rigour in Religion.*

How amazing is the distance between the extreme of negligence and self-indulgence in such nominal Christians, and the opposite excess of rigour which some have unhappily thought meritorious! between a Pascal (who dreaded the influence of pleasure so much, as to wear an iron, which he pressed into his side whenever he found himself taking delight in any object of sense) and those who think life lent them only to be squandered in senseless diversions, and the frivolous indulgence of vanity!—what a strange composition is man! ever diverging from the right line—forgetting the true end of his being—nor widely mistaking the means that lead to it.

If it were indeed true that the Supreme Being had made it the condition of our future happiness, that we should spend the days of our pilgrimage here on earth in voluntary suffering and mortification, and in continual opposition to every inclination of nature, it would surely be worth while to conform even to these conditions, however rigorous; and we see, by numerous examples, that it is not more than human creatures are capable of, when fully persuaded that their eternal interests demand it. But if, in fact, the laws of God are no other than directions for the better enjoyment of our existence—if he has forbid as nothing that is not pernicious, and commanded nothing that is not highly advantageous to us—if, like a beneficent parent, he inflicts neither punishment nor constraint unnecessarily, but makes our good the end of all his injunctions—it will then appear much more extraordinary that we should perversely go on in constant and acknowledged neglect of those injunctions.

Is there a single pleasure worthy of a rational being, which is not, within certain limitations, consistent with religion and virtue?—And are not the limits, within which we are permitted to enjoy them, the same which are prescribed by reason and nature, and which we cannot exceed without manifest hurt to ourselves, or others?—It is not the life of a hermit that is enjoined us:

it is only the life of a rational being, formed for society, capable of continual improvement, and consequently of continual advancement in happiness.

Sir Charles and Lady Worthy are neither gloomy ascetics, nor frantic enthusiasts; they married from affection no long acquaintance, and perfect esteem; they therefore enjoy the best pleasures of the heart in the highest degree. They concur in a rational scheme of life, which, whilst it makes them always chearful and happy, renders them the friends of human-kind, and the blessings of all around them. They do not desert their station in the world, nor deny themselves the proper and moderate use of their large fortune; though that portion of it, which is appropriated to the use of others, is that from which they derive their highest gratifications. They spend four or five months of every year in London, where they keep up an intercourse of hospitality and civility with many of the most respectable persons of their own, or of higher rank; but have endeavoured rather at a select than a numerous acquaintance; and as they never play at cards, this endeavour has the more easily succeeded. Three days in the week, from the hour of dinner, are given up to this intercourse with what may be called the world. Three more are spent in a family way, with a few intimate friends, whose tastes are conformable to their own, and with whom the book and working-table, or sometimes music, supply the intervals of useful and agreeable conversation. In these parties their children are always present, and partake of the improvement that arises from such society, or from the well-chosen pieces which are read aloud. The seventh day is always spent at home, after the due attendance on public worship; and is peculiarly appropriated to the religious instruction of their children and servants, or to other works of charity. As they keep regular hours, and rise early, and as Lady Worthy never pays or admits morning visits, they have seven or eight hours in every day, free from all interruption from the world, in which the cultivation of their own minds, and those of their children, the due attention to health, to economy, and to the poor, are carried on in the most regular manner.

Thus, even in London, they contrive, without the appearance of quarrelling with the world, or of shutting themselves up from it, to pass the greatest part of their

time

time in a reasonable and useful, as well as an agreeable manner. The rest of the year they spend at their family seat in the country, where the happy effects of their example, and of their assiduous attention to the good of all around them, are still more observable than in town. Their neighbours, their tenants, and the poor, for many miles about them, find in them a sure resource and comfort in calamity, and a ready assistance to every scheme of honest industry. The young are instructed at their expence, and under their direction, and rendered useful at the earliest period possible; the aged and the sick have every comfort administered that their state requires; the idle and dissolute are kept in awe by vigilant inspection; the quarrelsome are brought, by a sense of their own interest, to live more quietly with their family and neighbours, and amicably to refer their disputes to Sir Charles's decision.

This amiable pair are not less highly prized by the genteel families of their neighbourhood, who are sure of finding in their house the most polite and cheerful hospitality, and in them a fund of good sense and good humour, with a constant disposition to promote every innocent pleasure. They are particularly the delight of all the young people, who consider them as their patrons and their oracles, to whom they always apply for advice and assistance in any kind of distress, or in any scheme of amusement.

Sir Charles and Lady Worthy are seldom without some friends in the house with them during their stay in the country; but, as their methods are known, they are never broken in upon by their guests, who do not expect to see them till dinner-time, except at the hour of prayer and of breakfast. In their private walks or rides, they usually visit the cottages of the labouring poor, with all of whom they are personally acquainted; and by the sweetness and friendliness of their manner, as well as by their beneficent actions, they so entirely possess the hearts of these people, that they are made the confidants of all their family grievances, and the casuists to settle all their scruples of conscience or difficulties in conduct. By this method of conversing freely with them, they find out their different characters and capacities, and often discover and apply to their own benefit, as well as that of the person they distin-

guish, talents, which would otherwise have been for ever lost to the public.

From this slight sketch of their manner of living, can it be thought, that the practice of virtue costs them any great sacrifices? Do they appear to be the servants of a hard master?—It is true, they have not the amusement of gaming, nor do they curse themselves in bitterness of soul, for losing the fortune Providence had bestowed upon them: they are not continually in public places, nor staid in crowded assemblies; nor are their hours consumed in an insipid interchange of unmeaning chat with hundreds of fine people who are perfectly indifferent to them; but then, in return, the Being whom they serve indulges them in the best pleasures of love, of friendship, of parental and family affection, of divine beneficence, and a piety, which chiefly consists in joyful acts of love and praise!—not to mention the delights they derive from a taste uncorrupted and still alive to natural pleasures; from the beauties of nature, and from cultivating those beauties joined with utility in the scenes around them; and above all, from that flow of spirits, which a life of activity, and the constant exertion of right affections, naturally produce. Compare their countenances with those of the wretched slaves of the world, who are hourly complaining of fatigue, of listlessness, distaste, and vapours; and who, with faded cheeks and worn-out constitutions, still continue to haunt the scenes where once their vanity found gratification, but where they now meet only with mortification and disgust; then tell me, which has chosen the happier plan, admitting for a moment that no future penalty was annexed to a wrong choice? Listen to the character that is given of Sir Charles Worthy and his Lady, wherever they are named, and then tell me, whether even your idol, the world, is not more favourable to them than to you.

Perhaps it is vain to think of recalling those whom long habits, and the established tyranny of pride and vanity, have almost precluded from a possibility of imitating such patterns, and in whom the very desire of amendment is extinguished; but for those who are now entering on the stage of life, and who have their parts to choose, how earnestly could I wish for the spirit of persuasion—for such a “warning voice” as should make itself heard amidst all the

gay bustle that surrounds them! it should cry to them without ceasing, not to be led away by the crowd of fools, without knowing whither they are going—not to exchange real happiness for the empty name of pleasure—not to prefer fashion to immortality—and, not to fancy it possible for them to be innocent, and at the same time useless. *Mrs. Chapone.*

§ 106. *Virtue Man's true Interest.*

I find myself existing upon a little spot, surrounded every way by an immense unknown expansion—Where am I? What sort of place do I inhabit? Is it exactly accommodated, in every instance, to my convenience? Is there no excess of cold, none of heat, to offend me? Am I never annoyed by animals, either of my own kind, or a different? Is every thing subservient to me, as though I had ordered all myself?—No—nothing like it—the farthest from it possible.—The world appears not, then, originally made for the private convenience of me alone?—It does not.—But is it not possible so to accommodate it, by my own particular industry? If to accommodate man and beast, heaven and earth, if this be beyond me, 'tis not possible—What consequence then follows? or can there be any other than this—If I seek an interest of my own, detached from that of others, I seek an interest which is chimerical, and can never have existence?

How then must I determine? Have I no interest at all?—If I have not, I am a fool for staying here. 'Tis a smoky house; and the sooner out of it the better.—But why no interest?—Can I be contented with none, but one separate and detached? Is a social interest, joined with others, such an absurdity as not to be admitted?—The bee, the beaver, and the tribes of herding animals, are enow to conceive me, that the thing is somewhere at least possible. How, then, am I assured that 'tis not equally true of man?—Admit it; and what follows? If so, then honour and justice are my interest; then the whole train of moral virtues are my interest; without some portion of which, not even thieves can maintain society.

But, farther still—I stop not here—I pursue this social interest, as far as I can trace my several relations. I pass from my own flock, my own neighbourhood, my own nation, to the whole race of mankind, as dispersed throughout the earth.—Am I not related to them all by the

mutual aids of commerce, by the general intercourse of arts and letters, by that common nature of which we all participate?

Again—I must have food and cloathing—Without a proper genial warmth, I instantly perish—Am I not related, in this view, to the very earth itself? to the distant sun, from whose beams I derive vigour? to that stupendous course and order of the infinite host of heaven, by which the times and seasons ever uniformly pass on?—Were this order once confounded, I could not probably survive a moment; so absolutely do I depend on this common general welfare.—What, then, have I to do, but to enlarge virtue into piety? Not only honour and justice, and what I owe to man, is my interest; but gratitude also, acquiescence, resignation, adoration, and all I owe to this great polity, and its greater governor our common parent.

Harris.

§ 107. *On Gratitude.*

There is not a more pleasing exercise of the mind, than gratitude.

It is accompanied with such inward satisfaction, that the duty is sufficiently rewarded by the performance. It is not like the practice of many other virtues, difficult and painful, but attended with so much pleasure, that were there no positive command which enjoined it, nor any recompence laid up for it hereafter—a generous mind would indulge in it, for the natural gratification that accompanies it.

If gratitude is due from man to man—how much more from man to his Maker?—The Supreme Being does not only confer upon us those bounties which proceed more immediately from his hand, but even those benefits which are conveyed to us by others. Every blessing we enjoy, by what means soever it may be derived upon us, is the gift of Him who is the great Author of good; and Father of mercies.

If gratitude, when exerted towards one another, naturally produces a very pleasing sensation in the mind of a grateful man; it exalts the soul into rapture, when it is employed on this great object of gratitude, on this beneficent Being, who has given us every thing we already possess, and from whom we expect every thing we yet hope for.

Most of the works of the Pagan poets were either direct hymns of their deities, or tended indirectly to the celebration of their

their respective attributes and perfections. Those who are acquainted with the works of the Greek and Latin poets which are still extant, will, upon reflection, find this observation so true, that I shall not enlarge upon it. One would wonder that more of our Christian poets have not turned their thoughts this way, especially if we consider, that our idea of the Supreme Being, is not only infinitely more great and noble than could possibly enter into the heart of a heathen, but filled with every thing that can raise the imagination, and give an opportunity of the sublimest thoughts and conceptions.

Plutarch tells us of a heathen who was singing an hymn to Diana, in which he celebrated her for her delight in human sacrifices, and other instances of cruelty and revenge; upon which a poet who was present at this piece of devotion, and seems to have had a truer idea of the divine nature, told the votary, by way of reproof, that in recompence for his hymn, he heartily wished he might have a daughter of the same temper with the goddess he celebrated.—It was indeed impossible to write the praises of one of those false deities, according to the Pagan creed, without a mixture of impertinence and absurdity.

The Jews, who before the time of Christianity were the only people who had the knowledge of the true God, have set the Christian world an example how they ought to employ this divine talent, of which I am speaking. As that nation produced men of great genius, without considering them as inspired writers, they have transmitted to us many hymns and divine odes, which excel those that are delivered down to us by the ancient Greeks and Romans, in the poetry as much as in the subject to which it is consecrated. This, I think, might be easily shewn, if there were occasion for it.

Speaker.

§ 108. *Religion the Foundation of Content: an Allegory.*

Omar, the hermit of the mountain Aukabab, which rises on the east of Mecca, and overlooks the city, found one evening a man sitting pensive and alone, within a few paces of his cell. Omar regarded him with attention, and perceived that his looks were wild and haggard, and that his body was feeble and emaciated: the man also seemed to gaze steadfastly on Omar;

but such was the abstraction of his mind, that his eye did not immediately take cognizance of its object. In the moment of recollection he started as from a dream; he covered his face in confusion, and bowed himself to the ground, "Son of affliction," said Omar, "who art thou, and what is thy distress?" "My name," replied the stranger, "is Hassan, and I am a native of this city: the Angel of adversity has laid his hand upon me, and the wretch whom thine eye compassionates, thou canst not deliver." "To deliver thee," said Omar, "belongs to Him only, from whom we should receive with humility both good and evil: yet hide not thy life from me; for the burthen which I cannot remove, I may at least enable thee to sustain." Hassan fixed his eyes upon the ground, and remained some time silent; then fetching a deep sigh, he looked up at the hermit, and thus complied with his request.

It is now six years since our mighty lord the Caliph Almalic, whose memory be blessed, first came privately to worship in the temple of the holy city. The blessing which he petitioned of the prophet, as the prophet's vicegerent, he was diligent to dispense: in the intervals of his devotion, therefore, he went about the city relieving distress and restraining oppression: the widow smiled under his protection, and the weakness of age and infancy was sustained by his bounty. I, who dreaded no evil but sickness, and expected no good beyond the reward of my labour, was singing at my work, when Almalic entered my dwelling. He looked round with a smile of complacency; perceiving that though it was mean it was neat, and though I was poor I appeared to be content. As his habit was that of a pilgrim, I hastened to receive him with such hospitality as was in my power; and my cheerfulness was rather increased than restrained by his presence. After he had accepted some coffee, he asked me many questions; and though by my answers I always endeavoured to excite him to mirth, yet I perceived that he grew thoughtful, and eyed me with a placid but fixed attention. I suspected that he had some knowledge of me, and therefore enquired his country and his name. "Hassan," said he, "I have raised thy curiosity, and it shall be satisfied; he who now talks with thee, is Almalic, the sovereign of the faithful, whose seat is the throne of Medina,

dina, and whose commission is from above." These words struck me dumb with astonishment, though I had some doubt of their truth: but Almalic, throwing back his garment, discovered the peculiarity of his vest, and put the royal signet upon his finger. I then started up, and was about to prostrate myself before him, but he prevented me: "Hassan," said he, "forbear: thou art greater than I, and from thee I have at once derived humility and wisdom." I answered, "Mock not thy servant, who is but as a worm before thee: life and death are in thy hand, and happiness and misery are the daughters of thy will." "Hassan," he replied, "I can no otherwise give life or happiness, than by not taking them away: thou art thyself beyond the reach of my bounty, and possessed of felicity which I can neither communicate nor obtain. My influence over others, fills my bosom with perpetual solicitude and anxiety; and yet my influence over others extends only to their vices, whether I would reward or punish. By the bow-string, I can repress violence and fraud; and by the delegation of power, I can transfer the insatiable wishes of avarice and ambition from one object to another: but with respect to virtue, I am impotent; if I could reward it, I would reward it in thee. Thou art content, and hast therefore neither avarice nor ambition: to exalt thee, would destroy the simplicity of thy life, and diminish that happiness which I have no power either to encrease or to continue."

He then rose up, and commanding me not to disclose his secret, departed.

As soon as I recovered from the confusion and astonishment in which the Caliph left me, I began to regret that my behaviour had intercepted his bounty; and accused that cheerfulness of folly, which was the concomitant of poverty and labour. I now repined at the obscurity of my station, which my former insensibility had perpetuated: I neglected my labour, because I despised the reward; I spent the day in idleness, forming romantic projects to recover the advantages which I had lost: and at night, instead of losing myself in that sweet and refreshing sleep, from which I used to rise with new health, cheerfulness, and vigour, I dreamt of splendid habits and a numerous retinue, of gardens, palaces, eunuchs, and women, and waked only to regret the illusions that had vanished. My health was at

length impaired by the inquietude of my mind; I sold all my moveables for subsistence; and reserved only a mattress, upon which I sometimes lay from one night to another.

In the first moon of the following year, the Caliph came again to Mecca, with the same secrecy, and for the same purposes. He was willing once more to see the man, whom he considered as deriving felicity from himself. But he found me, not singing at my work, ruddy with health, vivid with cheerfulness; but pale and dejected, sitting on the ground, and chewing opium, which contributed to substitute the phantoms of imagination for the realities of greatness. He entered with a kind of joyful impatience in his countenance, which, the moment he beheld me, was changed to a mixture of wonder and pity. I had often wished for another opportunity to address the Caliph; yet I was confounded at his presence, and, throwing myself at his feet, I laid my hand upon my head, and was speechless. "Hassan," said he, "what canst thou have lost, whose wealth was the labour of thine own hand; and what can have made thee sad, the spring of whose joy was in thy own bosom? What evil hath befallen thee? Speak, and if I can remove it, thou art happy." I was now encouraged to look up, and I replied, "Let my Lord forgive the presumption of his servant, who rather than utter a falsehood, would be dumb for ever. I am become wretched by the loss of that which I never possessed: thou hast raised wishes, which indeed I am not worthy thou shouldst satisfy; but why should it be thought, that he who was happy in obscurity and indigence, would not have been rendered more happy by eminence and wealth?"

When I had finished this speech, Almalic stood some moments in suspense, and I continued prostrate before him. "Hassan," said he, "I perceive, not with indignation but regret, that I mistook thy character; I now discover avarice and ambition in thy heart, which lay torpid only because their objects were too remote to rouse them. I cannot therefore invest thee with authority, because I would not subject my people to oppression; and because I would not be compelled to punish thee for crimes which I first enabled thee to commit. But as I have taken from thee that which I cannot restore, I will at least gratify the wishes that I excited, lest thy

thy heart accuse me of injustice, and thou continue still a stranger to thyself. Arise, therefore, and follow me."—I sprung from the ground as it were with the wings of an eagle; I kissed the hem of his garment in an ecstasy of gratitude and joy; and when I went out of my house, my heart leaped as if I had escaped from the den of a lion. I followed Almalic to the caravansera in which he lodged: and after he had fulfilled his vows, he took me with him to Medina. He gave me an apartment in the seraglio; I was attended by his own servants; my provisions were sent from his own table; I received every week a sum from his treasury, which exceeded the most romantic of my expectations. But I soon discovered, that no dainty was so tasteful, as the food to which labour procured an appetite; no slumbers so sweet, as those which weariness invited; and no time so well enjoyed, as that in which diligence is expecting its reward. I remembered these enjoyments with regret; and while I was fighting in the midst of superfluities, which though they encumbered life, yet I could not give up, they were suddenly taken away.

Almalic, in the midst of the glory of his kingdom, and in the full vigour of his life, expired suddenly in the bath: such thou knowest was the destiny which the Almighty had written upon his head.

His son Aububekir, who succeeded to the throne, was incensed against me, by some who regarded me at once with contempt and envy; he suddenly withdrew my pension, and commanded that I should be expelled the palace; a command which my enemies executed with so much rigour, that within twelve hours I found myself in the streets of Medina, indigent and friendless, exposed to hunger and derision, with all the habits of luxury, and all the sensibility of pride. O! let not thy heart despise me, thou whom experience has not taught, that it is misery to lose that which it is not happiness to possess. O! that for me this lesson had not been written on the tablets of Providence! I have travelled from Medina to Mecca; but I cannot fly from myself. How different are the states in which I have been placed! The remembrance of both is bitter! for the pleasures of neither can return.—Hassan having thus ended his story, smote his hands together; and looking upward, burst into tears.

Omar, having waited till this agony was

past, went to him, and taking him by the hand, "My son," said he, "more is yet in thy power than Almalic could give, or Aububekir take away. The lesson of thy life the prophet has in mercy appointed me to explain.

"Thou wast once content with poverty and labour, only because they were become habitual, and ease and affluence were placed beyond thy hope; for when ease and affluence approached thee, thou wast content with poverty and labour no more. That which then became the object, was also the bound of thy hope; and he, whose utmost hope is disappointed, must inevitably be wretched. If thy supreme desire had been the delights of Paradise, and thou hadst believed that by the tenor of thy life these delights had been secured, as more could not have been given thee, thou wouldst not have regretted that less was not offered. The content which was once enjoyed, was but the lethargy of soul; and the distress which is now suffered, will but quicken it to action. Depart, therefore, and be thankful for all things; put thy trust in Him, who alone can gratify the wish of reason, and satisfy thy soul with good; fix thy hope upon that portion, in comparison of which the world is as the drop of the bucket, and the dust of the balance. Return, my son, to thy labour; thy food shall be again tasteful, and thy rest shall be sweet; to thy content also will be added stability, when it depends not upon that which is possessed upon earth, but upon that which is expected in Heaven."

Hassan, upon whose mind the Angel of instruction impressed the counsel of Omar, hastened to prostrate himself in the temple of the Prophet. Peace dawned upon his mind like the radiance of the morning; he returned to his labour with cheerfulness; his devotion became fervent and habitual; and the latter days of Hassan were happier than the first.

Adventurer.

§ 109. *Bad company*—meaning of the phrase—different classes of bad company—ill chosen company—what is meant by keeping bad company—the danger of it, from our aptness to imitate and catch the manners of others—from the great power and force of custom—from our bad inclinations.

"Evil communication," says the text, "corrupts good manners." The assertion is general, and no doubt all people suffer from such communication; but above all, the minds of youth will suffer; which

are yet unformed, unprincipled, unfurnished; and ready to receive any impression.

But before we consider the danger of keeping bad company, let us first see the meaning of the phrase.

In the phrase of the world, good company means fashionable people. Their stations in life, not their morals, are considered: and he, who associates with such, though they set him the example of breaking every commandment of the decalogue, is still said to keep good company.—I should wish you to fix another meaning to the expression; and to consider vice in the same detestable light, in whatever company it is found; nay, to consider all company in which it is found, be their station what it will, as bad company.

The three following classes will perhaps include the greatest part of those, who deserve this appellation.

In the first, I should rank all who endeavour to destroy the principles of Christianity—who jest upon Scripture—talk blasphemy—and treat revelation with contempt.

A second class of bad company are those, who have a tendency to destroy in us the principles of common honesty and integrity. Under this head we may rank gamblers of every denomination; and the low and infamous characters of every profession.

A third class of bad company, and such as are commonly most dangerous to youth, includes the long catalogue of men of pleasure. In whatever way they follow the call of appetite, they have equally a tendency to corrupt the purity of the mind.

Besides these three classes, whom we may call bad company, there are others who come under the denomination of ill-chosen company: trifling, insipid characters of every kind; who follow no business—are led by no ideas of improvement—but spend their time in dissipation and folly—whose highest praise it is, that they are only not vicious.—With none of these, a serious man would wish his son to keep company.

It may be asked what is meant by keeping bad company? The world abounds with characters of this kind: they meet us in every place; and if we keep company at all, it is impossible to avoid keeping company with such persons.

It is true, if we were determined never to have any commerce with bad men, we must, as the apostle remarks, “altogether go out of the world.” By keeping bad company, therefore, is not meant a casual intercourse with them, on occasion of business, or as they accidentally fall in our way; but having an inclination to consort with them—complying with that inclination—seeking their company, when we might avoid it—entering into their parties—and making them the companions of our choice. Mixing with them occasionally, cannot be avoided.

The danger of keeping bad company, arises principally from our aptness to imitate and catch the manners and sentiments of others—from the power of custom—from our own bad inclinations—and from the pains taken by the bad to corrupt us*.

In our earliest youth, the contagion of manners is observable. In the boy, yet incapable of having any thing instilled into him, we easily discover from his first actions, and rude attempts at language, the kind of persons with whom he has been brought up: we see the early spring of a civilized education, or the first wild shoots of rusticity.

As he enters farther into life, his behaviour, manners, and conversation, all take their cast from the company he keeps. Observe the peasant, and the man of education; the difference is striking. And yet God hath bestowed equal talents on each. The only difference is, they have been thrown into different scenes of life; and have had commerce with persons of different stations.

Nor are manners and behaviour more easily caught, than opinions, and principles. In childhood and youth, we naturally adopt the sentiments of those about us. And as we advance in life, how few of us think for ourselves? How many of us are satisfied with taking our opinions at second hand?

The great power and force of custom forms another argument against keeping bad company. However seriously disposed we may be; and however shocked at the first approaches of vice; this shocking appearance goes off, upon an intimacy with it. Custom will soon render the most disgusting thing familiar. And this is indeed a kind provision of nature, to render labour, and toil, and danger, which are the lot of man, more easy to him. The raw

* See this subject treated more at large in an anonymous pamphlet, on the employment of time.

soldier,

soldier, who trembles at the first encounter, becomes a hardy veteran in a few campaigns. Habit renders danger familiar, and of course indifferent to him.

But habit, which is intended for our good, may, like other kind appointments of nature, be converted into a mischief. The well-disposed youth, entering first into bad company, is shocked at what he hears, and what he sees. The good principles, which he had imbibed, ring in his ears an alarming lesson against the wickedness of his companions. But, alas! this sensibility is but of a day's continuance. The next jovial meeting makes the horrid picture of yesterday more easily endured. Virtue is soon thought a severe rule; the gospel, an inconvenient restraint: a few pang of conscience now and then interrupt his pleasures; and whisper to him, that he once had better thoughts: but even these by degrees die away; and he who at first was shocked even at the appearance of vice, is formed by custom into a profligate leader of vicious pleasures—perhaps into an abandoned tempter to vice.—So carefully should we oppose the first approaches of sin! so vigilant should we be against so insidious an enemy!

Our own bad inclinations form another argument against bad company. We have so many passions and appetites to govern; so many bad propensities of different kinds to watch, that, amidst such a variety of enemies within, we ought at least to be on our guard against those without. The breast even of a good man is represented in scripture, and experienced in fact, to be in a state of warfare. His vicious inclinations are continually drawing him one way; while his virtue is making efforts another. And if the scriptures represent this as the case even of a good man, whose passions, it may be imagined, are become in some degree cool, and temperate, and who has made some progress in a virtuous course; what may we suppose to be the danger of a raw unexperienced youth, whose passions and appetites are violent and seducing, and whose mind is in a still less confirmed state? It is his part surely to keep out of the way of temptation; and to give his bad inclinations as little room as possible to acquire new strength.

Gilpin.

§ 110. *Ridicule one of the chief arts of corruption—bad company injures our characters, as well as manners—presumption the forerunner of ruin—the advantages of good*

company equal to the disadvantages of bad—cautions in forming intimacies.

These arguments against keeping bad company, will still receive additional strength, if we consider farther, the great pains taken by the bad to corrupt others. It is a very true, but lamentable fact, in the history of human nature, that bad men take more pains to corrupt their own species, than virtuous men do to reform them. Hence those specious arts, that show of friendship, that appearance of disinterestedness, with which the profligate seducer endeavours to lure the unwary youth; and at the same time, yielding to his inclinations, seems to follow rather than to lead him. Many are the arts of these corrupters; but their principal art is ridicule. By this they endeavour to laugh out of countenance all the better principles of their wavering proselyte; and make him think contemptibly of those, whom he formerly respected; by this they stifle the ingenuous blush, and finally destroy all sense of shame. Their cause is below argument. They aim not therefore at reasoning. Railery is the weapon they employ; and who is there, that hath the steadiness to hear persons and things, whatever reverence he may have had for them; the subject of continual ridicule, without losing that reverence by degrees?

Having thus considered what principally makes bad company dangerous, I shall just add, that even were your morals in no danger from such intercourse, your characters would infallibly suffer. The world will always judge of you by your companions: and nobody will suppose, that a youth of virtuous principles himself, can possibly form a connection with a profligate.

In reply to the danger supposed to arise from bad company, perhaps the youth may say, he is so firm in his own opinions, so steady in his principles, that he thinks himself secure; and need not restrain himself from the most unreserved conversation.

Alas! this security is the very brink of the precipice: nor hath vice in her whole train a more dangerous enemy to you, than presumption. Caution, ever awake to danger, is a guard against it. But security lays every guard asleep. "Let him who thinketh he standeth," saith the apostle, "take heed, lest he fall." Even an apostle himself did fall, by thinking that he stood secure. "Though I should die with thee,"

thee," said St. Peter to his master, "yet will I not deny thee." That very night, notwithstanding this boasted security, he repeated the crime three several times. And can we suppose, that presumption, which occasioned an apostle's fall, shall not ruin an unexperienced youth? The story is recorded for our instruction: and should be a standing lesson against presuming upon our own strength.

In conclusion, such as the dangers are, which arise from bad company, such are the advantages which accrue from good. We imitate, and catch the manners and sentiments of good men, as we do of bad. Custom, which renders vice less a deformity, renders virtue more lovely. Good examples have a force beyond instruction, and warm us into emulation beyond precept; while the countenance and conversation of virtuous men encourage, and draw out into action every kindred disposition of our hearts.

Besides, as a sense of shame often prevents our doing a right thing in bad company; it operates in the same way in preventing our doing a wrong one in good. Our character becomes a pledge; and we cannot, without a kind of dishonour, draw back.

It is not possible, indeed, for a youth, yet unfurnished with knowledge (which fits him for good company) to chuse his companions as he pleases. A youth must have something peculiarly attractive, to qualify him for the acquaintance of men of established reputation. What he has to do, is, at all events, to avoid bad company; and to endeavour, by improving his mind and morals, to qualify himself for the best.

Happy is that youth, who, upon his entrance into the world, can chuse his company with discretion. There is often in vice, a gaiety, an unreserve, a freedom of manners, which are apt at first to engage the unwary; while virtue on the other hand, is often modest, reserved, diffident, backward, and easily disconcerted. That freedom of manners, however engaging, may cover a very corrupt heart: and this awkwardness, however unpleasing, may veil a thousand virtues. Suffer not your mind, therefore, to be easily either engaged, or disgusted at first sight. Form your intimacies with reserve: and if drawn unawares to an acquaintance you disapprove, immediately retreat. Open not your hearts to every profession of friendship. They, whose friendship is worth accepting, are, as

you ought to be, reserved in offering it. Chuse your companions, not merely for the sake of a few outward accomplishments—for the idle pleasure of spending an agreeable hour; but mark their disposition to virtue or vice; and, as much as possible, chuse those for your companions, whom you see others respect: always remembering, that upon the choice of your company depends in a great measure the success of all you have learned; the hopes of your friends; your future characters in life; and, what you ought above all other things to value, the purity of your hearts.

Gilpin.

§ 111. *Religion the best and only Support in Cases of real Strefs.*

There are no principles but those of religion to be depended on in cases of real stress; and these are able to encounter the worst emergencies; and to bear us up under all the changes and chances to which our life is subject.

Consider then what virtue the very first principle of religion has, and how wonderfully it is conducive to this end: That there is a God, a powerful, a wise and good Being, who first made the world, and continues to govern it;—by whose goodness all things are designed— and by whose providence all things are conducted to bring about the greatest and best ends. The sorrowful and pensive wretch that was giving way to his misfortunes, and mournfully sinking under them, the moment this doctrine comes in to his aid, hushes all his complaints—and thus speaks comfort to his soul,—“It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.—Without his direction, I know that no evil can befall me,—without his permission, that no power can hurt me;—it is impossible a Being so wise should mistake my happiness—or that a Being so good should contradict it.—If he has denied me riches or other advantages—perhaps he foresees the gratifying my wishes would undo me, and by my own abuse of them be perverted to my ruin.—If he has denied me the request of children—or in his providence has thought fit to take them from me—how can I say whether he has not dealt kindly with me, and only taken that away which he foresaw would embitter and shorten my days?—It does so to thousands, where the disobedience of a thankless child has brought down the parents grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. Has he visited me with sickness, poverty, or

other disappointments?—can I say, but these are blessings in disguise?—so many different expressions of his care and concern to disentangle my thoughts from this world, and fix them upon another—another, a better world beyond this!”—This thought opens a new face of hope and consolation to the unfortunate:—and as the persuasion of a Providence reconciles him to the evils he has suffered,—this prospect of a future life gives him strength to despise them, and esteem the light afflictions of this life, as they are, not worthy to be compared to what is reserved for him hereafter.

Things are great or small by comparison—and he who looks no further than this world, and balances the accounts of his joys and sufferings from that consideration, finds all his sorrows enlarged, and at the close of them will be apt to look back, and cast the same sad reflection upon the whole, which the Patriarch did to Pharaoh, “That few and evil had been the days of his pilgrimage.” But let him lift up his eyes towards heaven, and steadfastly behold the life and immortality of a future state,—he then wipes away all tears from off his eyes for ever; like the exiled captive, big with the hopes that he is returning home, he feels not the weight of his chains, or counts the days of his captivity; but looks forward with rapture towards the country where his heart is fixed before.

These are the aids which religion offers us towards the regulation of our spirit under the evils of life,—but like great cordials, they are seldom used but on great occurrences.—In the lesser evils of life, we seem to stand unguarded—and our peace and contentment are overthrown, and our happiness broke in upon, by a little impatience of spirit, under the crosses and untoward accidents we meet with. These stand unprovided for, and we neglect them as we do the slighter indispositions of the body—which we think not worth treating seriously, and so leave them to nature. In good habits of the body, this may do,—and I would gladly believe, there are such good habits of the temper, such a complexional ease and health of heart, as may often save the patient much medicine.—We are still to consider, that however such good frames of mind are got, they are worth preserving by all rules:—Patience and contentment,—which like the treasure hid in the field for which a man sold all he had to purchase—

is of that price, that it cannot be had at too great a purchase; since without it, the best condition of life cannot make us happy; and with it, it is impossible we should be miserable even in the worst.

Sterne's Sermons.

§ 112. *Ridicule dangerous to Morality and Religion.*

The unbounded freedom and licentiousness of raillery and ridicule, is become of late years so fashionable among us, and hath already been attended with such fatal and destructive consequences, as to give a reasonable alarm to all friends of virtue. Writers have rose up within this last century, who have endeavoured to blend and confound the colours of good and evil, to laugh us out of our religion, and undermine the very foundations of morality. The character of the Scoffer hath, by an unaccountable favour and indulgence, met not only with pardon, but approbation, and hath therefore been almost universally fought after and admired. Ridicule hath been called (and this for no other reason but because Lord Shaftesbury told us so) the test of truth, and, as such, has been applied indiscriminately to every subject.

But in opposition to all the puny followers of Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke, all the laughing moralists of the last age, and all the sneering satyrists of this, I shall not scruple to declare, that I look on ridicule as an oppressive and arbitrary tyrant, who like death throws down all distinction; blind to the charms of virtue, and deaf to the complaints of truth; a bloody Moloch, who delights in human sacrifice; who loves to feed on the flesh of the poor, and to drink the tear of the afflicted; who doubles the weight of poverty by scorn and laughter, and throws the poison of contempt into the cup of distress to embitter the draught.

Truth, say the Shaftesburians, cannot possibly be an object of ridicule, and therefore cannot suffer by it:—to which the answer is extremely obvious: Truth, naked, undisguised, cannot, we will acknowledge with them, be ridiculed; but Truth, like every thing else, may be misrepresented: it is the business of ridicule therefore to disguise her; to dress her up in a strange and fantastic habit; and when this is artfully performed, it is no wonder that the crowd should smile at her deformity.

The noblest philosopher and the best moralist

moralist in the heathen world, the great and immortal Socrates, fell a sacrifice to this pernicious talent: ridicule first misrepresented, and afterwards destroyed him: the deluded multitude condemned him, not for what he was, but for what he appeared to be, an enemy to the religion of his country.

The folly and depravity of mankind will always furnish out a sufficient fund for ridicule; and when we consider how vast and spacious a field the little scene of human life affords for malice and ill-nature, we shall not so much wonder to see the lover of ridicule rejoicing in it. Here he has always an opportunity of gratifying his pride, and satiating his malevolence: from the frailties and absurdities of others, he forms a wreath to adorn his own brow; gathers together, with all his art, the failings and imperfections of others, and offers them up a sacrifice to self-love. The lowest and most abandoned of mankind can ridicule the most exalted beings; those who never could boast of their own perfection,

Nor raise their thoughts beyond the earth they tread,
Even these can censure, those can dare decide
A Bacon's avarice, or a Tully's pride.

It were well indeed for mankind, if ridicule would confine itself to the frailties and imperfections of human nature, and not extend its baleful influence over the few good qualities and perfections of it: but there is not perhaps a virtue to be named, which may not, by the medium through which it is seen, be distorted into a vice. The glass of ridicule reflects things not only darkly, but falsely also: it always discolours the objects before it ventures to represent them to us. The purest metal, by the mixture of a base alloy, shall seem changed to the meanest. Ridicule, in the same manner, will cloath prudence in the garb of avarice, call courage rashness, and brand good-nature with the name of prodigality; will laugh at the compassionate man for his weakness, the serious man for his preciseness, and the pious man for his hypocrisy.

Modesty is one of virtue's best supports; and it is observable, that wherever this amiable quality is most eminently conspicuous, ridicule is always ready to attack and overthrow it. The man of wit and humour is never so happy as when he can raise the blush of ingenuous merit, or stamp

the marks of deformity and guilt on the features of innocence and beauty. Thus may our perfections conspire to render us both unhappy and contemptible!

The lover of ridicule will, no doubt, plead in the defence of it, that his design is to reclaim and reform mankind; that he is listed in the service of Virtue, and engaged in the cause of Truth;—but I will venture to assure him, that the allies he boasts of disclaim his friendship and despise his assistance. Truth desires no such soldier to fight under his banner; Virtue wants no such advocate to plead for her. As it is generally exercised, it is too great a punishment for small faults, too light and inconsiderable for great ones: the little foibles and blemishes of a character deserve rather pity than contempt; the more atrocious crimes call for hatred and abhorrence. Thus, we see, that in one case the medicine operates too powerfully, and in the other is of no effect.

I might take this opportunity to add, that ridicule is not always contented with ravaging and destroying the works of man, but boldly and impiously attacks those of God; enters even into the sanctuary, and prophanes the temple of the Most High. A late noble writer has made use of it to asperse the characters and destroy the validity of the writers of both the Old and New Testament; and to change the solemn truths of Christianity into matter of mirth and laughter. The books of Moses are called by him fables and tales, fit only for the amusement of children: and St. Paul is treated by him as an enthusiast, an idiot, and an avowed enemy to that religion which he professed. One would not surely think that there was any thing in Christianity so ludicrous as to raise laughter, or to excite contempt; but on the contrary, that the nature of its precepts, and its own intrinsic excellence, would at least have secured it from such indignities.

Nothing gives us a higher opinion of those ancient heathens whom our modern bigots are so apt to despise, than that air of piety and devotion which runs through all their writings; and though the Pagan theology was full of absurdities and inconsistencies, which the more refined spirits among their poets and philosophers must have doubtless despised, rejected, and condemned; such was their respect and veneration for the established religion of their country, such their regard to decency and seriousness,

seriousness, such their modesty and diffidence in affairs of so much weight and importance, that we very seldom meet with jest or ridicule on subjects which they held thus sacred and respectable.

The privilege of publicly laughing at religion, and the profession of it, of making the laws of God, and the great concerns of eternity, the objects of mirth and ridicule, was reserved for more enlightened ages; and denied the more pious heathens, to reflect disgrace and ignominy on the Christian era.

It hath, indeed been the fate of the best and purest religion in the world; to become the jest of fools; and not only, with its Divine Founder, to be scourged and persecuted, but with him to be mocked and spit at, trampled on and despised. But to consider the dreadful consequences of ridicule on this occasion, will better become the divine than essayist; to him therefore I shall refer it, and conclude this essay by observing, that after all the undeserved encomiums so lavishly bestowed on this child of wit and malice, so universally approved and admired, I know of no service the pernicious talent of ridicule can be of, unless it be to raise the blush of modesty, and put virtue out of countenance; to enhance the miseries of the wretched, and poison the feast of happiness; to insult man, affront God; to make us, in short, hateful to our fellow-creatures, uneasy to ourselves, and highly displeasing to the Almighty.

Smollet.

§ 113. On Prodigality.

It is the fate of almost every passion, when it has passed the bounds which nature prescribes, to counteract its own purpose. Too much rage hinders the warrior from circumspection; and too much eagerness of profit hurts the credit of the trader. Too much ardour takes away from the lover that easiness of address with which ladies are delighted. Thus extravagance, though dictated by vanity, and incited by voluptuousness, seldom procures ultimately either applause or pleasure.

If praise be justly estimated by the character of those from whom it is received, little satisfaction will be given to the spendthrift by the encomiums which he purchases. For who are they that animate him in his pursuits, but young men, thoughtless and abandoned like himself, unacquainted with all on which the wisdom of nations has impressed the stamp of excellence, and de-

void alike of knowledge and of virtue? By whom is his profusion praised, but by wretches who consider him as subservient to their purposes; Syrens that entice him to shipwreck; and Cyclops that are gaping to devour him?

Every man whose knowledge, or whose virtue, can give value to his opinion, looks with scorn or pity (neither of which can afford much gratification to pride) on him whom the panders of luxury have drawn into the circle of their influence, and whom he sees parcelled out among the different ministers of folly, and about to be torn to pieces by tailors and jockies, vintners and attorneys; who at once rob and ridicule him, and who are secretly triumphing over his weakness, when they present new incitements to his appetite, and heighten his desires by counterfeited applause.

Such is the praise that is purchased by prodigality. Even when it is yet not discovered to be false, it is the praise only of those whom it is reproachful to please, and whose sincerity is corrupted by their interest; men who live by the riots which they encourage, and who know, that whenever their pupil grows wise, they shall lose their power. Yet with such flatteries, if they could last, might the cravings of vanity, which is seldom very delicate, be satisfied: but the time is always hastening forward, when this triumph, poor as it is, shall vanish, and when those who now surround him with obsequiousness and compliments, fawn among his equipage, and animate his riots, shall turn upon him with insolence, and reproach him with the vices promoted by themselves.

And as little pretensions has the man, who squanders his estate by vain or vicious expences, to greater degrees of pleasure than are obtained by others. To make any happiness sincere, it is necessary that we believe it to be lasting; since whatever we suppose ourselves in danger of losing, must be enjoyed with solicitude and uneasiness, and the more value we set upon it, the more must the present possession be embittered. How can he, then, be envied for his felicity, who knows that its continuance cannot be expected, and who is conscious that a very short time will give him up to the gripe of poverty, which will be harder to be borne, as he has given way to more excesses, wantoned in greater abundance, and indulged his appetite with more profuseness.

It appears evident, that frugality is necessary

cessary even to compleat the pleasure of expence; for it may be generally remarked of those who squander what they know their fortune not sufficient to allow, that in their most jovial expence there always breaks out some proof of discontent and impatience; they either scatter with a kind of wild desperation and affected lavishness, as criminals brave the gallows when they cannot escape it; or pay their money with a peevish anxiety, and endeavour at once to spend idly, and to save meanly; having neither firmness to deny their passions, nor courage to gratify them, they murmur at their own enjoyments, and poison the bowl of pleasure by reflection on the cost.

Among these men there is often the vociferation of merriment, but very seldom the tranquillity of cheerfulness; they inflame their imaginations to a kind of momentary jollity, by the help of wine and riot; and consider it as the first business of the night to stupify recollection, and lay that reason asleep, which disturbs their gaiety, and calls upon them to retreat from ruin.

But this poor broken satisfaction is of short continuance, and must be expiated by a long series of misery and regret. In a short time the creditor grows impatient, the last acre is sold, the passions and appetites still continue their tyranny, with incessant calls for their usual gratifications; and the remainder of life passes away in vain repentance, or impotent desire.

Rambler.

§ 114. On Honour.

Every principle that is a motive to good actions ought to be encouraged, since men are of so different a make, that the same principle does not work equally upon all minds. What some men are prompted to by conscience, duty, or religion, which are only different names for the same thing, others are prompted to by honour.

The sense of honour is of so fine and delicate a nature, that it is only to be met with in minds which are naturally noble, or in such as have been cultivated by great examples, or a refined education. This essay therefore is chiefly designed for those, who by means of any of these advantages are, or ought to be, actuated by this glorious principle.

But as nothing is more pernicious than a principle of action, when it is misunderstood, I shall consider honour with respect to three sorts of men. First of all, with

regard to those who have a right notion of it. Secondly, with regard to those who have a mistaken notion of it. And thirdly, with regard to those who treat it as chimerical, and turn it into ridicule.

In the first place, true honour, though it be a different principle from religion, is that which produces the same effects. The lines of action, though drawn from different parts, terminate in the same point. Religion embraces virtue as it is enjoined by the laws of God; honour, as it is graceful and ornamental to human nature. The religious man fears, the man of honour scorns, to do an ill action. The latter considers vice as something that is beneath him; the other, as something that is offensive to the Divine Being: the one, as what is unbecoming; the other, as what is forbidden. Thus Seneca speaks in the natural and genuine language of a man of honour, when he declares "that were there no God to see or punish vice, he would not commit it, because it is of so mean, so base, and so vile a nature."

I shall conclude this head with the description of honour in the part of young Juba:

Honour's a sacred tie, the law of kings,
The noble mind's distinguishing perfection,
That aids and strengthens virtue when it meets
her,
And imitates her actions where she is not;
It ought not to be sported with. CATO.

In the second place, we are to consider those, who have mistaken notions of honour. And these are such as establish any thing to themselves for a point of honour, which is contrary either to the laws of God, or of their country; who think it more honourable to revenge, than to forgive an injury; who make no scruple of telling a lye, but would put any man to death that accuses them of it; who are more careful to guard their reputation by their courage than by their virtue. True fortitude is indeed so becoming in human nature, that he who wants it scarce deserves the name of a man; but we find several who so much abuse this notion, that they place the whole idea of honour in a kind of brutal courage: by which means we have had many among us, who have called themselves men of honour, that would have been a disgrace to a gibbet. In a word, the man who sacrifices any duty of a reasonable creature to a prevailing mode or fashion; who looks upon any thing as honourable that is displeasing to his Maker, or destructive to society;

city; who thinks himself obliged by this principle to the practice of some virtues, and not of others, is by no means to be reckoned among true men of honour.

Timogenes was a lively instance of one actuated by false honour. Timogenes would smile at a man's jest who ridiculed his Master, and at the same time run a man through the body that spoke ill of his friend. Timogenes would have scorned to have betrayed a secret that was intrusted with him, though the fate of his country depended upon the discovery of it. Timogenes took away the life of a young fellow in a duel, after having spoken ill of Belinda, a lady whom he himself had seduced in her youth, and betrayed into want and ignominy. To close his character, Timogenes, after having ruined several poor tradesmen's families who had trusted him, sold his estate to satisfy his creditors; but, like a man of honour, disposed of all the money he could make of it, in paying off his play debts, or, to speak in his own language, his debts of honour.

In the third place, we are to consider those persons, who treat this principle as chimerical, and turn it into ridicule. Men who are professedly of no honour, are of a more profligate and abandoned nature than even those who are actuated by false notions of it; as there is more hope of an ethic than of an atheist. These sons of vanity consider honour, with old Syphax in the play before-mentioned, as a fine imaginary notion that leads astray young inexperienced men, and draws them into real mischiefs, while they are engaged in the pursuit of a shadow. These are generally persons who, in Shakespeare's phrase, "are worn and hackneyed in the ways of men;" whose imaginations are grown callous, and have lost all those delicate sentiments which are natural to minds that are innocent and undepraved. Such old battered miscreants ridicule every thing as romantic, that comes in competition with their present interest; and treat those persons as visionaries, who dare to stand up, in a corrupt age, for what is not its immediate reward joined to it. The talents, interest, or experience of such persons, make them very often useful in all parties, and at all times. But whatever wealth and dignities they may arrive at, they ought to consider, that every one stands a blot in the annals of his country, who arrives at the temple of honour by any other way than through that of virtue.

Guardian,

§ 115. On Modesty.

I know no two words that have been more abused by the different and wrong interpretations, which are put upon them, than these two, Modesty and Assurance. To say such a one is a modest man, sometimes indeed passes for a good character; but at present is very often used to signify a sheepish, awkward fellow, who has neither good-breeding, politeness, nor any knowledge of the world.

Again: A man of assurance, though at first it only denoted a person of a free and open carriage, is now very usually applied to a profligate wretch, who can break through all the rules of decency and morality without a blush.

I shall endeavour, therefore, in this essay, to restore these words to their true meaning, to prevent the idea of Modesty from being confounded with that of Sheepishness, and to hinder Impudence from passing for Assurance.

If I was put to define Modesty, I would call it, The reflection of an ingenuous mind, either when a man has committed an action for which he censures himself, or fancies that he is exposed to the censure of others.

For this reason a man, truly modest, is as much so when he is alone as in company; and as subject to a blush in his closet as when the eyes of multitudes are upon him.

I do not remember to have met with any instance of modesty with which I am so well pleased, as that celebrated one of the young Prince, whose father, being a tributary king to the Romans, had several complaints laid against him before the senate, as a tyrant and oppressor of his subjects. The Prince went to Rome to defend his father; but coming into the senate, and hearing a multitude of crimes proved upon him, was so oppressed when it came to his turn to speak, that he was unable to utter a word. The story tells us, that the fathers were more moved at this instance of modesty and ingenuity, than they could have been by the most pathetic oration; and, in short, pardoned the guilty father for this early promise of virtue in the son.

I take Assurance to be, The faculty of possessing a man's self, or of saying and doing indifferent things without any uneasiness or emotion in the mind. That which generally gives a man assurance, is a moderate knowledge of the world; but above all,

all, a mind fixed and determined in itself to do nothing against the rules of honour and decency. An open and assured behaviour is the natural consequence of such a resolution. A man thus armed, if his words or actions are at any time misinterpreted, retires within himself, and from a consciousness of his own integrity, assumes force enough to despise the little censures of ignorance or malice.

Every one ought to cherish and encourage in himself the modesty and assurance I have here mentioned.

A man without assurance is liable to be made uneasy by the folly or ill-nature of every one he converses with. A man without modesty is lost to all sense of honour and virtue.

It is more than probable, that the Prince above-mentioned possessed both those qualifications in a very eminent degree. Without assurance, he would never have undertaken to speak before the most august assembly in the world; without modesty, he would have pleaded the cause he had taken upon him, though it had appeared ever so scandalous.

From what has been said, it is plain that modesty and assurance are both amiable, and may very well meet in the same person. When they are thus mixed and blended together, they compose what we endeavour to express, when we say, a modest assurance; by which we understand, the just mean between bashfulness and impudence.

I shall conclude with observing, that as the same man may be both modest and assured, so it is also possible for the same person to be both impudent and basifal.

We have frequent instances of this odd kind of mixture in people of depraved minds and mean education; who, though they are not able to meet a man's eyes, or pronounce a sentence without confusion, can voluntarily commit the greatest villanies or most indecent actions.

Such a person seems to have made a resolution to do ill, even in spite of himself, and in defiance of all those checks and restraints his temper and complexion seem to have laid in his way.

Upon the whole, I would endeavour to establish this maxim. That the practice of virtue is the most proper method to give a man a becoming assurance in his words and actions. Guilt always seeks to shelter itself in one of the extremes; and is sometimes attended with both.

Spectator.

§ 116. *On disinterested Friendship.*

I am informed that certain Greek writers (Philosophers, it seems, in the opinion of their countrymen) have advanced some very extraordinary positions relating to friendship; as, indeed, what subject is there, which these subtle geniuses have not tortured with their sophistry?

The authors to whom I refer, dissuade their disciples from entering into any strong attachments, as unavoidably creating superfluous disquietudes to those who engage in them; and, as every man has more than sufficient to call forth his sollicitude in the course of his own affairs, it is a weakness they contend, anxiously to involve himself in the concerns of others. They recommend it also, in all connections of this kind, to hold the bands of union extremely loose; so as always to have it in one's power to straiten or relax them, as circumstances and situations shall render most expedient. They add, as a capital article of their doctrine, that "to live exempt from cares, is an essential ingredient to constitute human happiness: but an ingredient, however, which he, who voluntarily distresses himself with cares in which he has no necessary and personal interest, must never hope to possess."

I have been told likewise, that there is another set of pretended philosophers, of the same country, whose tenets, concerning this subject, are of a still more illiberal and ungenerous cast.

The proposition they attempt to establish, is, that "friendship is an affair of self-interest entirely, and that the proper motive for engaging in it, is, not in order to gratify the kind and benevolent affections, but for the benefit of that assistance and support which is to be derived from the connection." Accordingly they assert, that those persons are most disposed to have recourse to auxiliary alliances of this kind, who are least qualified by nature, or fortune, to depend upon their own strength and powers: the weaker sex, for instance, being generally more inclined to engage in friendships, than the male part of our species; and those who are deprest by indigence, or labouring under misfortunes, than the wealthy and the prosperous.

Excellent and obliging sages, these, undoubtedly! To strike out the friendly affections from the moral world, would be like extinguishing the sun in the natural

each

each of them being the source of the best and most grateful satisfactions that Heaven has conferred on the sons of men. But I should be glad to know what the real value of this boasted exemption from care, which they promise their disciples, justly amounts to? an exemption flattering to self-love, I confess; but which, upon many occurrences in human life, should be rejected with the utmost disdain. For nothing, surely, can be more inconsistent with a well-poised and manly spirit, than to decline engaging in any laudable action, or to be discouraged from persevering in it, by an apprehension of the trouble and solicitude with which it may probably be attended. Virtue herself, indeed, ought to be totally renounced, if it be right to avoid every possible means that may be productive of uneasiness: for who, that is actuated by her principles, can observe the conduct of an opposite character, without being affected with some degree of secret dissatisfaction? Are not the just, the brave, and the good, necessarily exposed to the disagreeable emotions of dislike and aversion, when they respectively meet with instances of fraud, of cowardice, or of villainy? It is an essential property of every well-constituted mind, to be affected with pain, or pleasure, according to the nature of those moral appearances that present themselves to observation.

If sensibility, therefore, be not incompatible with true wisdom (and it surely is not, unless we suppose that philosophy deadens every finer feeling of our nature) what just reason can be assigned, why the sympathetic sufferings which may result from friendship, should be a sufficient inducement for banishing that generous affection from the human breast? Extinguish all emotions of the heart, and what difference will remain, I do not say between man and brute, but between man and a mere inanimate clod? Away then with those austere philosophers, who represent virtue as hardening the soul against all the softer impressions of humanity! The fact, certainly, is much otherwise: a truly good man is, upon many occasions, extremely susceptible of tender sentiments; and his heart expands with joy, or shrinks with sorrow, as good or ill fortune accompanies his friend. Upon the whole, then, it may fairly be concluded, that, as in the case of virtue, so in that of friendship, those painful sensations, which may sometimes be produced by the one, as well as by the other, are equally insufficient

grounds for excluding either of them from taking possession of our bosoms.

They who insist that "utility is the first and prevailing motive, which induces mankind to enter into particular friendships," appear to me to divest the association of its most amiable and engaging principle. For, to a mind rightly disposed, it is not so much the benefits received, as the affectionate zeal from which they flow, that gives them their best and most valuable recommendation. It is so far indeed from being verified by fact, that a sense of our wants is the original cause of forming these amicable alliances; that, on the contrary, it is observable, that none have been more distinguished in their friendships than those whose power and opulence, but, above all, whose superior virtue (a much firmer support) have raised them above every necessity of having recourse to the assistance of others.

The true distinction, then, in this question is, that "although friendship is certainly productive of utility, yet utility is not the primary motive of friendship." Those selfish sensualists, therefore, who, lulled in the lap of luxury, presume to maintain the reverse, have surely no claim to attention; as they are neither qualified by reflection, nor experience, to be competent judges of the subject.

Good Gods! is there a man upon the face of the earth, who would deliberately accept of all the wealth and all the affluence this world can bestow, if offered to him upon the severe terms of his being unconnected with a single mortal whom he could love, or by whom he should be beloved? This would be to lead the wretched life of a detested tyrant, who, amidst perpetual suspicions and alarms, passes his miserable days a stranger to every tender sentiment, and utterly precluded from the heart-felt satisfactions of friendship.

Melmoth's Translation of Cicero's Lælius.

§ 117. *The Art of Happiness.*

Almost every object that attracts our notice has its bright and its dark side. He who habituates himself to look at the displeasing side, will sour his disposition, and consequently impair his happiness: while he, who constantly beholds it on the bright side, insensibly meliorates his temper, and, in consequence of it, improves his own happiness, and the happiness of all about him.

Arachne and Melissa are two friends,
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They

They are, both of them, women in years, and alike in birth, fortune, education, and accomplishments. They were originally alike in temper too; but, by different management, are grown the reverse of each other. Arachne has accustomed herself to look only on the dark side of every object. If a new poem or play makes its appearance, with a thousand brilliancies, and but one or two blemishes, she slightly skims over the passages that should give her pleasure, and dwells upon those only that fill her with dislike.—If you shew her a very excellent portrait, she looks at some part of the drapery which has been neglected, or to a hand or finger which has been left unfinished.—Her garden is a very beautiful one, and kept with great neatness and elegance; but if you take a walk with her in it, she talks to you of nothing but blights and storms, of snails and caterpillars, and how impossible it is to keep it from the litter of falling leaves and worm-casts.—If you sit down in one of her temples, to enjoy a delightful prospect, she observes to you, that there is too much wood, or too little water; that the day is too sunny, or too gloomy; that it is sultry, or windy; and finishes with a long harangue upon the wretchedness of our climate.—When you return with her to the company, in hope of a little chearful conversation, she casts a gloom over all, by giving you the history of her own bad health, or of some melancholy accident that has befallen one of her daughter's children. Thus she insensibly sinks her own spirits, and the spirits of all around her; and, at last, discovers, she knows not why, that her friends are grave.

Melissa is the reverse of all this. By constantly habituating herself to look only on the bright side of objects, she preserves a perpetual chearfulness in herself, which, by a kind of happy contagion, she communicates to all about her. If any misfortune has befallen her, she considers it might have been worse, and is thankful to Providence for an escape. She rejoices in solitude, as it gives her an opportunity of knowing herself; and in society, because she can communicate the happiness she enjoys. She opposes every man's virtue to his failings, and can find out something to cherish and applaud in the very worst of her acquaintance. She opens every book with a desire to be entertained or instructed, and therefore seldom misses what she looks for. Walk with her,

though it be on a heath or a common, and she will discover numberless beauties, unobserved before, in the hills, the dales, the brooms, brakes, and the variegated flowers of weeds and poppies. She enjoys every change of weather and of season, as bringing with it something of health or convenience. In conversation, it is a rule with her, never to start a subject that leads to any thing gloomy or disagreeable. You therefore never hear her repeating her own grievances; or those of her neighbours; or, (what is worst of all) their faults and imperfections. If any thing of the latter kind be mentioned in her hearing, she has the address to turn it into entertainment, by changing the most odious railing into a pleasant raillery. Thus Melissa, like the bee, gathers honey from every weed; while Arachne, like the spider, sucks poison from the fairest flowers. The consequence is, that, of two tempers once very nearly allied, the one is ever sour and dissatisfied, the other always gay and chearful; the one spreads an universal gloom, the other a continual sunshine.

There is nothing more worthy of our attention, than this art of happiness. In conversation, as well as life, happiness very often depends upon the slightest incidents. The taking notice of the badness of the weather, a north-east-wind, the approach of winter, or any trifling circumstance of the disagreeable kind, shall insensibly rob a whole company of its good-humour, and fling every member of it into the vapours. If, therefore, we would be happy in ourselves, and are desirous of communicating that happiness to all about us, these minutiae of conversation ought carefully to be attended to. The brightness of the sky, the lengthening of the day, the increasing verdure of the spring, the arrival of any little piece of good news, or whatever carries with it the most distant glimpse of joy, shall frequently be the parent of a social and happy conversation. Good-manners exact from us this regard to our company. The clown may repine at the sunshine that ripens the harvest, because his turnips are burnt up by it; but the man of refinement will extract pleasure from the thunder-storm to which he is exposed, by remarking on the plenty and refreshment which may be expected from the succeeding shower.

Thus does politeness, as well as good sense, direct us to look at every object on

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§ 118.

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the bright side; and, by thus acting, we cherish and improve both. By this practice it is that Melissa is become the wisest and best-bred woman living; and by this practice, may every person arrive at that agreeableness of temper, of which the natural and never-failing fruit is Happiness.

Harris.

§ 118. *Happiness is founded in Rectitude of Conduct.*

All men pursue Good, and would be happy, if they knew how: not happy for minutes, and miserable for hours; but happy, if possible, through every part of their existence. Either, therefore, there is a good of this steady, durable kind, or there is none. If none, then all good must be transient and uncertain; and if so, an object of the lowest value, which can little deserve either our attention or inquiry. But if there be a better good, such a good as we are seeking; like every other thing, it must be derived from some cause; and that cause must be either external, internal, or mixed; in as much as, except these three, there is no other possible. Now a steady, durable good cannot be derived from an external cause; by reason, all derived from externals must fluctuate as they fluctuate. By the same rule, not from a mixture of the two; because the part which is external will proportionably destroy its essence. What then remains but the cause internal; the very cause which we have supposed, when we place the Sovereign Good in Mind—in Rectitude of Conduct?

Ibid.

§ 119. *The Choice of Hercules.*

When Hercules was in that part of his youth, in which it was natural for him to consider what course of life he ought to pursue, he one day retired into a desert, where the silence and solitude of the place very much favoured his meditations. As he was musing on his present condition, and very much perplexed in himself on the state of life he should chuse, he saw two women, of a larger stature than ordinary, approaching towards him. One of them had a very noble air, and graceful deportment; her beauty was natural and easy, her person clean and unspotted, her eyes cast towards the ground with an agreeable reserve, her motion and behaviour full of modesty, and her raiment as white as snow. The other had a great deal of health and floridness in her countenance, which she

had helped with an artificial white and red; and she endeavoured to appear more graceful than ordinary in her mein, by a mixture of affectation in all her gestures. She had a wonderful confidence and assurance in her looks, and all the variety of colours in her dress, that she thought were the most proper to shew her complexion to advantage. She cast her eyes upon herself, then turned them on those that were present, to see how they liked her, and often looked on the figure she made in her own shadow. Upon her nearer approach to Hercules, she stepped before the other lady, who came forward with a regular, composed carriage, and running up to him, accosted him after the following manner:

"My dear Hercules," says she, "I find you are very much divided in your thoughts upon the way of life that you ought to chuse: be my friend, and follow me; I will lead you into the possession of pleasure, and out of the reach of pain, and remove you from all the noise and disquietude of business. The affairs of either war or peace shall have no power to disturb you. Your whole employment shall be to make your life easy, and to entertain every sense with its proper gratifications. Sumptuous tables, beds of roses, clouds of perfumes, concerts of music, crowds of beauties, are all in readiness to receive you. Come along with me into this region of delights, this world of pleasure, and bid farewell for ever to care, to pain, to business." Hercules hearing the lady talk after this manner, desired to know her name: to which she answered, "My friends, and those who are well acquainted with me, call me Happiness; but my enemies, and those who would injure my reputation, have given me the name of Pleasure."

By this time the other lady was come up, who addressed herself to the young hero in a very different manner:—"Hercules," says she, "I offer myself to you, because I know you are descended from the Gods, and give proofs of that descent, by your love to virtue, and application to the studies proper for your age. This makes me hope you will gain, both for yourself and me, an immortal reputation. But before I invite you into my society and friendship, I will be open and sincere with you; and must lay this down as an established truth, that there is nothing truly valuable, which can be purchased without

without pains and labour. The Gods have set a price upon every real and noble pleasure. If you would gain the favour of the Deity, you must be at the pains of worshipping him; if the friendship of good men, you must study to oblige them; if you would be honoured by your country, you must take care to serve it: in short, if you would be eminent in war or peace, you must become master of all the qualifications that can make you so. These are the only terms and conditions upon which I can propose happiness."

The Goddess of Pleasure here broke in upon her discourse: "You see," said she, "Hercules, by her own confession, the way to her pleasures is long and difficult; whereas that which I propose is short and easy." "Alas!" said the other lady, whose visage glowed with passion, made up of scorn and pity, "what are the pleasures you propose? To eat before you are hungry, drink before you are athirst, sleep before you are tired; to gratify appetites before they are raised, and raise such appetites as nature never planted. You never heard the most delicious music, which is the praise of one's-self; nor saw the most beautiful object, which is the work of one's own hands. Your votaries pass away their youth in a dream of mistaken pleasures; while they are hoarding up anguish, torment, and remorse, for old age."

"As for me, I am the friend of Gods, and of good men; an agreeable companion to the artizan; an household guardian to the fathers of families; a patron and protector of servants; an associate in all true and generous friendships. The banquets of my votaries are never costly, but always delicious; for none eat or drink at them, who are not invited by hunger and thirst. Their slumbers are sound, and their wakings chearful. My young men have the pleasure of hearing themselves praised by those who are in years; and those who are in years, of being honoured by those who are young. In a word, my followers are favoured by the Gods, beloved by their acquaintance, esteemed by their country, and, after the close of their labours, honoured by posterity."

We know, by the life of this memorable hero, to which of these two ladies he gave up his heart; and, I believe, every one who reads this, will do him the justice to approve his choice.

Tatler.

Letters on the Choice of Company.

§ 120. LETTER I.

SIR,

As you are now no longer under the eye of either a parent, or a governor, but wholly at liberty to act according to your own inclinations; your friends cannot be without their fears, on your account; they cannot but have some uneasy apprehensions, lest the very bad men, with whom you may converse, should be able to efface those principles, which so much care was taken at first to imprint, and has been since to preserve, in you.

The intimacy, in which I have, for many years, lived with your family, suffers me not to be otherwise than a sharer of their concern, on this occasion; and you will permit me, as such, to lay before you those considerations, which, while they shew you your danger, and excite your caution, may not be without their use in promoting your safety.

That it should be the endeavour of our parents, to give us just apprehensions of things, as soon as we are capable of receiving them; and, in our earlier years, to stock our minds with useful truths—to accustom us to the use of our reason, the restraint of our appetites, and the government of our passions, is a point, on which, I believe, all are agreed, whose opinions about it you would think of any consequence.

From a neglect in these particulars, you see so many of one sex, as much Girls at Sixty, as they were at Sixteen—their follies only varied—their pursuits, though differently, yet equally, trifling; and you thence, likewise, find near as many of the other sex, Boys in their advanced years—as fond of feathers and toys in their riper age, as they were in their childhood—living as little to any of the purposes of Reason, when it has gained its full strength, as they did when it was weakest. And, indeed, from the same source all those vices proceed, which most disturb and distress the world.

When no pains are taken to correct our bad inclinations, before they become confirmed and fixed in us; they acquire, at length, that power over us, from which we have the worst to fear—we give way to them in the instances where we see plainest, how grievously we must suffer by our compliance—

pliance—we know not how to resist *them*, notwithstanding the obvious ruin which will be the consequence of our yielding to them.

I don't say, that a right *education* will be as beneficial, as a wrong one is hurtful: the very best may be disappointed of its proper effects.

Though the tree you set be put into an excellent soil, and trained and pruned by the skilfullest hand; you are not, however, sure of its thriving: vermin may destroy all your hopes from it.

When the utmost care has been taken to send a young man into the world well principled, and fully apprised of the reasonableness of a religious and virtuous life; he is, yet, far from being temptation proof—he even then may fall, may fall into the worst both of principles and practices; and he is very likely to do so, in the place where you are, if he will associate with those who speak as freely as they act; and who seem to think, that their understanding would be less advantageously shewn, were they not to use it in defence of their vices.

That we may be known by our company, is a truth become proverbial. The ends we have to serve may, indeed, occasion us to be often with the persons, whom we by no means resemble; or, the place, in which we are settled, keeping us at a great distance from others, if we will converse at all, it must be with some; whose manners we least approve. But when we have our choice—when no valuable interest is promoted by associating with the corrupt—when, if we like the company of the wise and considerate, we may have it; that we then court the one, and shun the other, seems as full a proof, as we can well give, that, if we avoid vice, it is not from the sense we have of the amiableness of virtue.

Had I a large collection of books, and never looked into any that treated on grave and useful subjects, that would contribute to make me wiser or better; but took those frequently, and those only, into my hands, that would raise my laughter, or that would merely amuse me, or that would give me loose and impure ideas; or that inculcated atheistical or sceptical notions, or that were filled with scurrility and invective, and therefore could only serve to gratify my spleen and ill-nature; they, who knew this to be my practice, must,

certainly, form a very unfavourable opinion of my capacity, or of my morals. If nature had given me a good understanding, and much of my time passed in reading: were I to read nothing but what was trifling, it would spoil that understanding, it would make me a Trifler: and though formed with commendable dispositions, or with none very blameable; yet if my *favourite authors* were—*such* as encouraged me to make the most of the *present hour*; not to look beyond it, to taste every pleasure that offered itself, to forego no advantage that I could obtain—*such* as gave vice nothing to fear, nor virtue any thing to hope, in a future state; you would not, I am sure, pronounce otherwise of those writers, than that they would hurt my natural disposition, and carry me *lengths of guilt*, which I should not have gone, without this encouragement to it.

Nor can it be allowed, that *reading* wrong things would thus affect me, but it must be admitted, that *bearing* them would not do it less. *Both* fall under the head of *Conversation*; we fitly apply that term alike to *both*; and we may be said, with equal propriety, to converse with books, and to converse with men. The impression, indeed, made on us by what we hear, is, usually, much stronger than that received by us from what we read. That which passes in our usual intercourse is listened to, without fatiguing us: each, then, taking his turn in speaking, our attention is kept awake: we mind throughout what is said, while we are at liberty to express our own sentiments of it, to confirm it, or to improve upon it, or to object to it, or to hear any part of it repeated, or to ask what questions we please concerning it.

Discourse is an application to our eyes, as well as ears; and the one organ is here so far assistant to the other, that it greatly increases the force of what is transmitted to our minds by it. The air and action of the speaker gives no small importance to his words: the very tone of his voice adds weight to his reasoning; and occasions that to be attended to throughout, which, had it come to us from the pen or the press, we should have been asleep, before we had read half of it.

That bad companions will make us as bad as themselves, I don't affirm. When we are not kept from their vices by our principles, we may be so by our constitution;

tion; we may be less profligate than they are, by being more cowardly: but what I advance as *certain* is, That we cannot be safe among them—that they will, in some degree, and may in a very great one, hurt our morals. You may not, perhaps, be unwilling to have a distinct view of the reasons, upon which I assert this.

I will enter upon them in my next.

I was going to write adieu, when it came into my thoughts, that though you may not be a stranger to the much censured doctrine of our countryman *Pelagius*—a stranger to his having denied *original* sin; you may, perhaps, have never heard how he accounted for the depravity, so manifest in the whole of our race—He ascribed it to *imitation*. Had he said, that imitation makes some of us very bad, and most of us worse than we otherwise should have been; I think he would not have passed for an heretic. Dean Bolton.

§ 121. LETTER II.

SIR,

I promised you, that you should have the reasons, why I think that there is great danger of your being hurt by vicious acquaintance. The first thing I have here to propose to your consideration is, what I just mentioned at the close of my last—our aptness to imitate.

For many years of our life we are forming ourselves upon what we observe in those about us. We do not only learn their phrase, but their manners. You perceive among whom we were educated, not more plainly by our idiom, than by our behaviour. The cottage offers you a brood, with all the rusticity and savageness of its grown inhabitants. The civility and courtesy, which, in a well-ordered family, are constantly seen by its younger members, fail not to influence their deportment; and will, whatever their natural *brutality* may be, dispose them to check its appearance, and express an averseness from what is rude and disgusting. Let the descendant of the meanest be placed, from his infancy, where he perceives every one mindful of decorum: the marks of his *extractions* are soon obliterated; at least, his carriage does not discover it: and were the heir of his *Grace* to be continually in the kitchen or stables, you would soon only know the young lord by his cloaths and title: in other respects, you would judge him the son of the groom or the scullion.

Nor is the disposition to imitate confined to our childhood; when this is past, and the man is to shew himself, he takes his colours, if I may so speak, from those he is near—he copies their appearance—he seldom is, what the use of his reason, or what his own inclinations, would make him.

Are the opinions of the generality, in most points, any other, than what they hear advanced by this or that person high in their esteem, and whose judgment they will not allow themselves to question? You well know, that one could not lately go into company, but the first thing said was—You have, undoubtedly, read—What an excellent performance it is! The fine imagination of its noble author discovers itself in every line. As soon as this noble author seriously disowned it, all the admiration of it was at an end. Its merit, with those who had most commended it, appeared to be wholly the name of its supposed writer. Thus we find it throughout. It is not *what* is written, or said, or acted, that we examine; and approve or condemn, as it is, in itself, good or bad: Our concern is, who writes, who says, or does it; and we, accordingly, regard, or disregard it.

Look round the kingdom. There is, perhaps, scarce a village in it, where the seriousness or dissoluteness of the Squire, if not quite a driveller, is not more or less seen in the manners of the rest of its inhabitants. And he, who is thus a pattern, takes his pattern—fashions himself by some or other of a better estate, or higher rank, with whose character he is pleased, or to whom he seeks to recommend himself.

In what a short space is a whole nation metamorphosed! Fancy yourself in the middle of the last century. What grave faces do you every where behold! The most dissolutely inclined suffers not a libertine expression to escape him. He who least regards the practice of virtue, assumes its appearance.

None claim, from their stations, a privilege for their vices. The greatest strangers to the influence of religion observe its form. The soldier not only forbears an oath, but reproves it; he may possibly make free with your goods, as having more grace than you, and, therefore, a better title to them; but you have nothing to fear from his lewdness, or drunkenness.

The Royal Brothers at length land—
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The monarchy is restored. How soon then is a grave aspect denominated a puritanical; decorum, preciseness; seriousness, fanaticism! He, who cannot *extinguish* in himself *all* sense of religion, is industrious to conceal his having *any*—appears worse than he *is*—would be thought to favour the crime, that he dares not commit. The lowliest conversation is the politest. No representation pleases, in which decency is consulted. Every favourite drama has its hero a libertine—introduces the magistrate, only to expose him as a knave, or a cuckold; and the priest, only to describe him a profligate or hypocrite.

How much greater the power of fashion is, than that of any laws, by whatsoever penalties enforced, the experience of all ages and nations concurs in teaching us. We readily imitate, where we cannot be constrained to obey; and become by example, what our rule seeks in vain to make us.

So far we may be all truly styled players, as we all personate—borrow our characters—represent some other—act a part—exhibit those who have been most under our notice, or whom we seek to please, or with whom we are pleased.

As the Chameleon, who is known
To have no colours of his own;
But borrows from his neighbour's hue
His white or black, his green or blue;
And struts as much in ready light,
Which credit gives him upon sight,
As if the rainbow were in tail
Settled on him, and his heirs male:
So the young Squire, when first he comes
From country school to *Will's* or *Tom's*;
And equally, in truth, is fit
To be a statesman, or a wit;
Without one notion of his own,
He saunters wildly up and down;
Till some acquaintance, good or bad,
Takes notice of a staring lad,
Admits him in among the gang:
They jest, reply, dispute, harangue:
He sits and talks as they befriend him,
Smear'd with the colours which they lend him.
Thus, merely, as his fortune chances,
His merit or his vice advances.

PRIOR.

Dean Bolton.

§ 122. LETTER III.

SIR,

My last endeavoured to shew you, how apt we are to imitate. Let me now desire you to consider the disposition you will be under to recommend yourself to those; whose company you desire, or would not decline.

Conversation, like marriage, must have consent of parties. There is no being intimate with him, who will not be so with you; and, in order to contract or support an intimacy, you must give the pleasure, which you would receive. This is a truth, that every man's experience must force him to acknowledge: we are sure to seek in vain a familiarity with any, who have no interest to serve by us, if we disregard their humour.

In courts, indeed, where the art of pleasing is more studied than it is elsewhere, you see people more dexterously accommodating themselves to the turn of those, for whose favour they wish; but, wherever you go, you almost constantly perceive the same end pursued by the same means, though there may not be the same adroitness in applying them. What a proof have you in your own neighbourhood, how effectual these means are!

Did you ever hear *Charles*—tell a good story—make a shrewd observation—drop an expression, which bordered either on wit or humour? Yet he is welcome to all tables—he is much with those, who have wit, who have humour, who are, really, men of abilities. Whence is this, but from the approbation he shews of whatever passes? A story he cannot tell, but he has a laugh in readiness for every one he *bears*: by his admiration of wit, he supplies the want of it; and they, who have capacity, find no objection to the meanness of *his*, whilst he appears always to think as they do. Few have their looks and tempers so much at command as this man; and few, therefore, are so happy in recommending themselves; but as in *his way* of doing it, there is, obviously, the greatest likelihood of success, we may be sure that it will be *the way* generally taken.

Some, I grant, you meet with, who by their endeavours, on all occasions, to shew a superior discernment, may seem to think, that to gain the favour of any one, he must be brought to their sentiments, rather than they adopt his; but I fear these persons will be found only giving too clear a proof, either how absurdly self-conceit sometimes operates, or how much knowledge there may be, where there is very little common sense.

Did I, in describing the creature called MAN, represent him as having, in proportion to his bulk, more brains than any other animal we know of; I should not think this description false, though it could

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be.

be proved that *some* of the species had scarce any brains at all.

Even where favour is not particularly sought, the very civility, in which he, who would be regarded as a well-bred man, is never wanting, must render him unwilling to avow the most just disapprobation of what his companions agree in acting, or commending. He is by no means to give disgust, and, therefore, when he hears the worst principles vindicated, and the best ridiculed; or when he sees what ought to be matter of the *greatest shame*, done without any; he is to acquiesce, he is to shew no token, that what passes is at all offensive to him.

Consider yourself then in either of these situations—desirous to engage the favour of the bad man, into whose company you are admitted—or, only unwilling to be thought by him deficient in good manners; and, I think, you will plainly see the danger you should apprehend from him—the likelihood there is, that you should at length lose the *abhorrence* of his crimes, which, when with him, you never express.

Will you ask me, why it is not as *probable*—that you should reform your vitious acquaintance, as that they should corrupt you? Or, why may I not as well suppose—that they will avoid speaking and acting what will give you offence, as that you will be averse from giving them any—that they will consult your inclinations, as that you will theirs?

To avoid the length, which will be equally disagreeable to both of us, I will only answer—Do you know any instance, which can induce you to think this *probable*? Are not you apprised of many instances, that greatly weaken the probability of it?

The vast disproportion, which there is between the numbers of the serious and the dissolute, is so notorious, as to render it unquestionable—that the influence of the latter far exceeds the influence of the former—that a vitious man is much more likely to corrupt a virtuous, than to be reformed by him.

An answer of the same kind, I should have judged satisfactory; if, with respect to what I had urged in my former letter, you questioned me—why the readiness to imitate those, with whom we are much conversant, might not as justly encourage you to *hope*, when you associated with the

less sober, that they might be won to your regularity, as occasion you to *fear*, that you should be brought to join in their excesses? The good have been for so long a space losing ground among us, and the bad gaining it; and these are now become such a prodigious multitude; that it is undeniable, how much more apt we are to form ourselves on the manners of those, who disregard their duty, than on theirs, who are attentive to it.

You will here be pleased to remark, that I do not consider you as setting out with any reforming views—as conversing with the *immoral*, in order to dispose them to reasonable pursuits; but that I only apply to you, as induced to associate with them from the easiness of their temper, or the pleasantry of their humour, or your common literary pursuits, or their skill in some of your favourite amusements, or on some such-like account: and then, what I have observed may not appear a weak argument, that they are much more likely to hurt you, than you are to benefit them.

I will close my argument and my letter, with a passage from a very good historian, which will shew you the sense of one of the ablest of the ancient legislators on my present subject.

This writer, mentioning the laws which *Charendas* gave the *Thurians*, says—"He enacted a law with reference to an *evil*, on which former lawgivers had not adverted, that of keeping bad company. As he conceived that the morals of the good were sometimes quite ruined by their dissolute acquaintance—that vice was apt, like an infectious disease, to spread itself, and to extend its contagion even to the best disposed of our species. In order to prevent this mischief, he expressly enjoined, that none should engage in any intimacy or familiarity with immoral persons—he appointed that an accusation might be exhibited for keeping bad company, and laid a heavy fine on such as were convicted of it."

Remember *Charendas*, when you are disposed to censure the caution suggested by

Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.

Dean Bolton.

LETTER IV.

SIR,

Sir Francis Walsingham, in a letter to

Mr. *Anthony Bacon*, then a very young man, and on his travels, expresses himself thus—"The danger is great that we are subject to, in lying in the company of the worse sort. In natural bodies, evil airs are avoided, and infection shunned of them, that have any regard to their health. There is not so probable a reason for the corruptions, that may grow to the mind of one from the mind of another; but the danger is far greater, and the effects, we see more frequent: for the number of evil-disposed in mind is greater than the number of sick in body. . . . Though the well-disposed will remain some good space without corruption, yet time, I know not how, worketh a wound into him. . . . Which weakness of ours considered, and easiness of nature, apt to be deceived, looked into; they do best provide for themselves, that separate themselves, as far as they can, from the bad, and draw as nigh to the good, as by any possibility they can attain to."

To what I have already said, in proof that we should thus separate ourselves, I shall now add two further reasons for our doing it: 1. The wrong inclinations, the proneness to violate some or other part of our duty, which we all find in ourselves. 2. The power which custom hath, to reconcile us to what we, at first, most dreaded.

Need I tell you, that our natural depravity has not only been the theme of christian writers; but that the most eminent heathen authors, poets, historians, philosophers, join in confessing it?

Where, alas! is the man, who has not his wrong tendencies to lament? Whom do you know able to conceal them, to prevent a clear discovery of them in his practice?

According as we are liable to act amiss, we, certainly, must be in more or less danger from associating with those, who either will seek to draw us into guilt—or will countenance us in it—or will diminish our abhorrence of it. Some danger from such company there must be even to him, whose inclinations are least faulty; since they may be made worse—they may produce bad actions, the repetition of which would form bad habits; and nothing could be so likely to heighten any depravity of disposition, and carry it to the most fatal lengths of misconduct, as a familiarity with those, who have no dread of guilt, or none that

restrains them from complying with the temptations they meet with to guilt.

You may, perhaps, think, that you could be in no danger from any companion, to whose excesses you found not in yourself the least propensity: but believe me, my friend, this would by no means warrant your safety.

Though such a companion might not induce you to offend in the very same way, that he doth; he would, probably, make you the offender, that you otherwise never would have been. If he did not bring you to conform to his practice, would he not be likely to insinuate his principles? His disregard to his duty would tend to render you indifferent to yours: and, while he lessened your general regard to virtue, he might make you a very bad man, though you should continue wholly to avoid his particular crimes.

The unconcernedness, with which he gave his worst inclinations their scope, could hardly be day after day observed, without making you less solicitous to restrain your own wrong tendencies, and strongly urging you to a compliance with them.

2. The danger there is in conversing with the immoral will be yet more apparent; if you will, next, attend to the power of custom in reconciling us to that, which we, at first, most dreaded.

Whence is it, that veteran troops face an enemy, with almost as little concern as they perform their exercise? The man of the greatest courage among them felt, probably, in the first battle wherein he was, a terror that required all his courage to surmount. Nor was this terror, afterwards, overcome by him, but by degrees; every succeeding engagement abated it: the oftener he fought, the less he feared: by being habituated to danger, he learned, at length, to despise it.

An ordinary swell of the ocean alarms the youth who has never before been upon it; but he, whose fears are now raised, when there is nothing that ought to excite them, becomes soon without any, even when in a situation, that might justly dismay him; he is calm, when the storm is most violent; and discovers no uneasy apprehensions, while the vessel, in which he sails, is barely not sinking.

You cannot, I am persuaded, visit an hospital—survey the variety of distress there—hear the complaints of the sick—

see the sores of the wounded, without being yourself in pain, and a sharer of their sufferings.

The constant attendants on these poor wretches have no such concern: with dispositions not less humane than yours, they do not feel the emotions, that you would be under, at this scene of misery; their frequent view of it has reconciled them to it—has been the cause, that their minds are no otherwise affected by it, than yours is by the objects ordinarily before you.

From how many other instances might it be shewn, that the things, which, at their first appearance, strike us with the greatest terror, no sooner become familiar, than they cease to discompose us? Let, therefore, our education have been the carefullest and wisest; let there have been used therein all the means likeliest to fix in us an abhorrence of vice; we, yet, cannot be frequently among those, who allow themselves in it, and have as few scruples about the concealment of any crime they are disposed to, as about its commission, without beholding it with abundantly less uneasiness than its first view occasioned us.

When it is so beheld; when what is very wrong no more shocks us—is no longer highly offensive to us; the natural and necessary progress is to a still farther abatement of our aversion from it: and what is of force enough to conquer a strong dislike, may be reasonably concluded, well able to effect some degree of approbation. How far this shall proceed, will, indeed, depend, in a good measure, upon our temper, upon our constitutional tendencies, upon our circumstances: but surely we are become bad enough, when it is not the consideration of what is amiss in any practice, that withholds us from it—when we only avoid it, because it is not agreeable to our humour; or, because the law punishes it; or because it interferes with some other criminal gratification, which better pleases us.

I began this with an extract from a letter of *Walsingham*; I will end it with one from a letter of *Grotius*, when ambassador in *France*, to his brother, concerning his son, whom he had recommended to that gentleman's care.

After having expressed his wishes, that the young man might be formed a complete advocate, he concludes thus—“Above all things I intreat you to cultivate those seeds of knowledge, sown by me in him, which are productive of piety; and to recommend to him, for companions,

“such persons as are themselves careful to “make a proficiency therein.”

GROT. Ep. 426.
Dean Bolton.

§ 124. LETTER V.

SIR,

When I ended my last I continued in my chair, thinking of the *objections* which might be made to what I had written to you. The following then occurred to me.

That, when we are in possession of truth, from fair examination and full evidence, there can be very little danger of our being induced to quit it, either by repeatedly hearing the weak objections of any to it, or by remarking them to *act* as wrongly as they *argue*—That, as in *mathematics* the proposition, which we had once demonstrated, would always have our assent, whomsoever we heard cavilling at it, or ridiculing our judgment concerning it: so in *morals*, when once a due consideration of the essential and unchangeable differences of things hath rendered us certain of what is right and our duty: we can never be made less certain thereof, whatever errors, in judgment or practice, we may daily observe in our associates, or daily hear them absurd enough to defend—That, when we not only plainly *perceive* the practice of virtue to be most becoming us—to be what the nature and reason of things require of us; but actually *feel*, likewise, the satisfaction which it affords, the solid pleasure which is its inseparable attendant; there can be *no more ground* to *suppose*, that our having continually before us the follies and vices of any would lead us to depart from what we know to be fittest, and have experienced to be best for us, than there can be to *believe*, that a man in his wits would leave the food, which his judgment approved and his palate relished, for another sort, which he saw, indeed, pleasing to his companions, but which he was certain would poison them.

How little weight there is in this kind of arguing, I think every one might be convinced, who would attend to his own practice, who would consider the *numerous instances* in which he cannot but condemn it—in which he cannot but acknowledge it contrary to what his present welfare requires it should be.

Let us think the most justly of our duty, and shun, with the greatest care, all who would countenance us in a *departure* from it; we still shall find *that departure too frequent*

quent—we shall experience it so, even when it is truly lamented; and when, to avoid it, is both our wish and our endeavour. And if the influence of truth may receive such hindrance from our *natural depravity*, from this *depravity*, even when we have kept out of the way of all, who would encourage us to favour it, there, surely, must be an high degree of probability, that we shall be less mindful of our obligations, when we are not only prompted by our own appetites to violate them, but moved thereto by the counsel and example of those, whose conversation best pleases us; and whose opinions and actions will, therefore, come with a more than ordinary recommendation to us.

The assent, which we give, upon sufficient evidence, to *moral truths*, could no more be unsettled by ridicule and sophistry, than that which we give to *mathematical truths*, did our minds always retain the same disposition with respect to the one, that they do, as to the other.

With regard to the latter, we are never willing to be deceived—we always stand alike affected towards them: our *conviction* about them was obtained, *at first*, upon such grounds, as must *always* remain our inducements to preserve it: no lust could be gratified, no interest served, by its acting less forcibly upon us: in its defence the credit of our understanding is greatly concerned. And how vain must ridicule and sophistry be necessarily thought, where their only aim is, that we should acknowledge a superior discernment in those persons, whose opposition increases our contempt of their *ignorance*, by making a plainer discovery of it?

As for *moral truths*, they are often disagreeable to us—When we have had the fullest *evidence* of them, we want not, occasionally, the inclination to overlook it: If, under *some circumstances*, we are ready to acknowledge *its force*; there are *others*, when we will not give it any attention. Here fancy and hope interpose; a *governing passion* allows us only a faint view of, or wholly diverts our notice from, whatever should be our inducement to restrain it; and suffers us to dwell on nothing but what will justify, or excuse, us in giving way to it. Our reluctance to admit, that we have not *judged* as we ought to have done, is strangely abated, when we thereby are set at liberty to *act* as we please.

When the endeavour is to laugh us, or to argue us, out of those principles that

we, with much *self-denial* adhere to; we shall but feebly oppose its success. He has a strong party on his side within our bosoms, who seeks to make us quit *opinions*, which are still controuling our *affections*. If we are not secure from acting contrary to our *duty*, what cogent proofs soever we have of its being such, and what satisfaction soever we have had in its discharge; we are highly concerned to avoid every *temptation* to offend: and it, undoubtedly, is a very strong one, to *bear* continually what is likeliest to remove the fear of indulging our appetites; and continually to *see*, that they who apply to us *act* as they *advise*—allow themselves in the liberties, they would have us to take; and are under none of the checks, which they prompt us to throw off.

Though what we did not relish, and what we thought would speedily destroy us, we might not eat, when our *companions* shewed themselves fond of it, and pressed us to taste it; yet, if we apprehend *no immediate danger* from their meal—if we were eye-witnesses of its being attended with *none*—if they were continually expressing their high delight in it, and repeating their assurances, that all, either our indifference towards, or disrelish of it, was only from prejudice and prepossession; we, very probably, should at length yield, and quit both our disgust of their repast, and our dread of its consequences. And if this might ensue, when we were invited to partake of that, which was less agreeable to our palates, what should be feared, when our company tempted us to *that*, which we could be pleased with, and were only withheld from by such an *apprehension of danger*, as nothing could sooner remove, than our observing those, with whom we most conversed, to be without it?

Reason is, certainly, always on the side of duty. Nor is there, perhaps, any man, who, when he seriously considers what is best for him to do, will not purpose to do that which is right. But, since we can act without consideration in the most important articles, and nothing is less likely to be considered, than what we find quite customary with others—what we see them act without remorse or scruple; when we are, day after day, eye-witnesses of our associates allowing themselves in a wrong practice, persisting in it without expressing the least dread of its consequences; it is as absurd to think, that our moral feeling should not be injured thereby, as it is to

suppose, that our hands would preserve the same softness, when they had been for years accustomed to the oar, which they had when they first took it up; or, that hard labour would affect us as much when inured to it, as when we entered upon it.

I will, for the present, take my leave of you with an *Italian* proverb, and an *English* one exactly answerable to it—

Dimmi con chi tu vai, sapro chel che fai.

Tell me with whom thou goest, and I'll tell thee what thou doest.

Dean Bolton.

§ 125. LETTER VI.

SIR,

I know not what I can add on the present subject of our correspondence, that may be of greater service to you than the following short relation.—I may not, indeed, be exact in every particular of it, because I was not at all acquainted with the gentleman, whom it concerns; and because many years have passed since I received an account of him; but as my information came from persons, on whose veracity I could depend, and as what they told me much affected me when I heard it, and has, since, been very often in my thoughts; I fear that the melancholy description, which you will here have of human frailty, is but too true in every thing material therein.

At the first appearance of ——— in town, nothing, perhaps, was more the topic of conversation, than his merit. He had read much: what he had read, as it was on the most useful subjects, so he was thoroughly master of it; gave an exact account of it, and made very wise reflections upon it. During his long residence at a distance from our metropolis, he had met with few, to whom he was not greatly superior, both in capacity and attainments: yet this had not in the least disposed him to dictate, to be positive and assuming, to treat any with contempt or neglect.

He was obliging to all, who came near him; talked on the subjects which they best understood, and which would be likeliest to induce them to take their full share of the conversation.

They, who had spent every winter near the court, saw nothing in his behaviour, that shewed how far he had lived from it—nothing which was less suitable to any civility, that could be learned in it.

His manners were only less courtly, in their simplicity and purity. He did not,

often, directly reprove the *libertine* discourse of his equals; but would recommend himself to none, by expressing the slightest approbation of *such discourse*: He shewed it did not please him, though he declined saying so.

He forbore that investive against the manners of the age, which could only irritate; and thought that, at his years, the fittest censure he could pass on them, would be to avoid them. It seemed, indeed, his particular care, that he might not be represented either as a bigot, or a cynic; but yet, as he knew how to defend his principles, so he shewed himself, on every proper occasion, neither afraid nor ashamed to engage in their defence.

His conversation was among persons of his own rank, only so far as decorum required it should be: their favourite topics were so little to his taste, that his leisure hours, where he could have his choice, were passed among those, who had the most learning and virtue, and, whether distinguished, or not, by their ancestors' worth, would be so by their own.

He had high notions of his duty to his country; but having seen what self-interestness, at length, shewed itself, where he had heard the strongest professions of patriotism, it made him very cautious with whom he engaged, and utterly averse from determining of any as friends to the public, merely because they were opposers of the court.

No one judged more rightly of the hurt that must ensue, from irreligion spreading itself among the common people; and, therefore, where his example was most remarked, and could be most efficacious, he took particular care, that it should promote a just reverence of the Deity.

Thus did A. A. set out in the world, and thus behaved, for some years, notwithstanding the bad examples he had every where before him, among those of his own station. In one of the accomplishments of a gentleman (though, surely, one of the very meanest of them) he was thought to excel; and many fine speeches were made him upon that account. They were but too much regarded by him; and, gradually, drew him often into the company that he would have despised, had he heard less of his own praise in it. The compliments so repeatedly paid him by the frivolous reconciled him, at length, to them. As his attachment to them got ground, his seriousness lost it. The patriot was no more

more—The zeal he had for the morals of his countrymen abated.—

The tragical conclusion of his story, let those tell you, who would not feel that concern at the relation of it, which I should do: this you certainly may learn from it—That, as the constant dropping of water wears away the hardest stone, so the continual solicitations of the vicious are not to be withstood by the firmest mind—All, who are in the way of them, will be hurt by them—Wheresoever they are used, they will make an impression—He only is secure from their force, who will not hazard its being tried upon him.

In what you have hitherto received from me, I have argued wholly from *your own dispositions*, and endeavoured to shew you, from thence, the danger of having bad companions: See now your danger from *their dispositions*. And, first, let these persons be considered only, in general, as partial to their notions and practices, and eager to defend them.

Whatever our *persuasion* or *conduct* is, we are usually favourable to it; we have our plea for it: very few of us can bear, with any patience, that it should be judged irrational: The approbation of it is a compliment to our understanding, that we receive with pleasure; and to censure it, is such a disparagement of us, as doth not fail to disgust us. I will not say, there are *none* to be found, that give themselves little or no concern who think or act as they do; but it is certain, that, ordinarily, we are desirous to be joined in the cause we espouse—we are solicitous to vindicate and spread our opinions, and to have others take the same courses with us. Should I allow you to be as intent on this, as any of your acquaintance are; yet, pray, consider what you may expect, when you stand alone, or when a majority is against you—when each of them relieves the other in an attack upon you—when this attack is, day after day, repeated—when your numerous opponents join in applauding, or strengthening, or enlivening their several objections to your sentiments; and in treating whatever you can urge in your defence, as absurd, or weak and impertinent—when your peace can only be purchased by your silence—when you find, that there is no hope of bringing those you delight to be with into your opinions, that they confirm each other in opposition to you, and that you can only be agreeable to them, by adopting their maxims, and conforming to their manners.

It is next to be considered what you may fear from an intimacy with the immoral, when they must look upon themselves to be *reproached* by such of their acquaintance, as will not concur with them in their excesses. They cannot but do this; because all who seek either to make them alter their manners, or to weaken their influence upon others, charge them with what is, really, the highest *reproach* to them; and because they are sensible, that the arguments likeliest to be used by any one for his not complying with them, are grounded on the *mischiefs* of their conduct, or on its *folly*. Regard then yourself, as in their place. Reflect how you would behave towards the man whose opinion of you was, that you acted either a very criminal, or a very imprudent part: reflect, I say, how you would behave towards the person thus judging of you, if you wished to preserve a familiarity with him, but yet, was resolved to persist in your notions and practice. You, certainly, would try every method to remove his distaste of them; you would colour them as agreeably as you possibly could: you would spare no pains to weaken every objection, he could have to them—you would, in your turn, attack his maxims and manners; you would seek to convince him upon what slight grounds he preferred them to yours—you would apply to every artifice, that could give them the appearance of being less defensible, or that could incline him to overlook what might be urged in their defence.

And if this might naturally be supposed the part you would act towards others; you ought to expect that they, in the same circumstances, would behave alike towards you. But can you think it prudent to let them try, with what success they may proceed? Would not caution be your most effectual security? Would it not be the wisest method of providing for your safety, to keep out of the way of danger?

You are, further, to look upon those, from associating with whom I would dissuade you, as extremely solicitous to be kept in countenance. The vicious well know, to how many objections their conduct is liable: they are sensible, to what esteem *good morals* are entitled, what *praise* they *claim*, and what they, in the most corrupt times, *receive*.

Virtue is so much for the interest of mankind, that there can never be a general agreement, to deny all manner of applause to the practice of it: such numbers are made sufferers by a departure from its rules,

rules, that there are few crimes, which meet not with an extensive censure.

You have long since learned it to be the language of paganism itself, that

"All, who act contrary to what the reason of things requires—who do what is hurtful to themselves or others, must stand self-condemned:" and you cannot want to be informed, in what light they are seen by those who do not share their guilt. The *endeavour*, therefore, of such men, while they are without any purpose of amendment, will, unquestionably, be, to make their cause as specious as possible, by engaging many in its defence, and to silence censure, by the danger, that would arise from the numbers it would provoke. The motives to this endeavour, when duly reflected on, will fully satisfy us, with what zeal it must be accompanied; and it may well, therefore, alarm all, on whom its power is likely to be tried—may well induce them to consider seriously, what they have to fear from it, how much their virtue may suffer by it.

I will conclude this with a short story of the Poet *Dante*, for which *Bayle* quotes *Petrarch*. Among other visits made by *Dante*, after his banishment from *Florence*, one was to the then much-famed *Can*, Prince of *Verona*.

Can treated him, at first, with great civility; but this did not last: and by the little complaisance at length shewn the Poet, he plainly perceived that he ceased to be an acceptable guest.

Scholars, it seems, were not *Can's* favourites—he liked those much better, who studied to divert him; and ribaldry was by no means the discourse that least pleased him. Suspecting that this did not raise *Dante's* opinion of him, he one day took occasion to single out the most obnoxious of the libertine crew, that he entertained; and, after high praises given the man, turning to *Dante*, he said, I wonder how it is, that this mad fellow is beloved by us all, as giving us the pleasure which, really, we do not find in your company, wise as you are thought to be.

Sir, answered the Poet, you would not wonder at this, if you considered, that our love of any proceeds from their manners being suitable, and their dispositions similar, to our own.

Dean Bolton.

§ 126. LETTER VII.

SIR,

I have but one thing more to propose to your consideration, as a dissuative from

associating with the vicious: and it is—The way in which they, ordinarily, seek to corrupt those, with whom they converse.

The *logic* of the immoral contributes but little to increase their numbers, in comparison of what they effect by *raillery* and *ridicule*. This is their *strength*; they are sensible of its being so; and you may be assured that it will be exerted against you. There is nothing that cannot be jested with; and there is nothing that we, universally, bear worse, than to be made the jest of any.

What reasoning on moral subjects may not have its force evaded by a man of wit and humour; and receive a turn, that shall induce the less considerate to slight it, as weak and inconclusive? The most becoming practice—that which is most our duty, and the importance of which to our present welfare is most evident, a lively fancy easily places in a ridiculous view, and thereby brings it into an utter neglect.

That reverence of the Deity, which the best both ancient and modern writers have so strongly recommended—which the worthiest men in every age have so carefully expressed—which any observation of nature, any attention to our own frame fails not to inculcate, is yet, by being represented under the garb of superstition or fanaticism, seen among us to such disadvantage, that many, our military gentlemen especially, appear to take a pride in shewing themselves divested of it.

Conjugal fidelity, though of such moment to the peace of families—to their interest—to the prosperity of the commonwealth, that, by the laws of the wisest and best regulated states, the severest punishment has been inflicted on the violation of it, is, nevertheless, by the levity, with which some have treated it, so much, at present, slighted, that the adulterer is well received: Women, who would think it the grossest affront to have their virtue questioned, who affect the character of the strictest observers of decorum, shun him not—shew him the utmost complaisance. Whatever dishonour, in this case, falls on any, it accrues wholly to the injured person.

Can you assign a better reason, why the intemperate, among the meaner people, have so prodigiously increased their numbers, than the banter they use towards such as they meet with disposed to sobriety,—the mockery with which they treat it,—

the

the songs and catches, with which they are so plentifully provided, in derision of it?

I cannot give you the very terms of Lord *Shaftesbury*, as I have not his works; but I think I may be certain that there is an observation in them to this effect—That, “had the enemies to Christianity exposed its first professors, not to wild beasts, but to ridicule, their endeavours to stop its progress might have had very different success from what they experienced.”

Had the wit of man been only concerned in the spreading that religion, I believe the conjecture well founded. But this success could no more have affected the truth of that religion, than it lessens the worth of a public spirit, of honesty, of temperance, that so many have been laughed out of them—that the jest made of them has occasioned their being so rare among us.

The author of the *Beggars Opera* gives the true character of his *Newgate* tribe, when he exhibits them ludicrous on all pretences to virtue, and thus hardening each other in their crimes. It was the most effectual means to keep up their spirits under their guilt, and may well be judged the likeliest method of bringing others to share it.

“The Duke of Buckingham” says a late writer, “had the art of turning persons or things into ridicule, beyond any man of the age. He possessed the young King [*Charles II.*] with very ill principles, both as to religion and morality, and with a very mean opinion of his father, whose stiffness was, with him, a subject of raillery.” It is elsewhere observed, that, to make way for the ruin of the Lord *Clarendon*, “He often acted and mimicked him in the King’s presence, walking stately with a pair of bellows before him, for the purse, and Colonel *Titus* carrying a fire-shovel on his shoulder, for the mace; with which sort of banter and farce the King was too much delighted.”

Such are the impressions, to the disparagement of the best things, and of the best men, that may be made by burlesque and buffoonry: They can destroy the efficacy of the wisest precepts, and the noblest examples.

The Monarch here spoken of may, perhaps, be thought as ill-disposed as the worst of his favourites; and rather humoured, than corrupted, by the sport they made with all that is, ordinarily, held serious. Were this admitted to be true of

him—Were we to suppose his natural depravity not heightened by any thing said or done before him, in derision of virtue or the virtuous; yet the effects of his being accustomed to such representations may be looked upon as extremely mischievous; when we may, so probably, attribute to them the loose he gave to his natural depravity—the little decorum he observed—that utter carelessness to save appearances, whence so much hurt ensued to the morals of his people, and whereby he occasioned such distraction in his affairs, so weakened his authority, so entirely lost the affections of the best of his subjects; and whence that he did not experience still worse consequences, may be ascribed to a concurrence of circumstances, in which his prudence had no share.

The weakness of an argument may be clearly shewn—The arts of the sophister may be detected, and the fallacy of his reasoning demonstrated—To the most subtle objections there may be given satisfactory answers: but there is no confusing raillery—the acutest logician would be silenced by a *Merry Andrew*.

It is to no manner of purpose that we have reason on our side, when the laugh is against us: and how easy is it, by playing with our words—by a quibble—by the lowest jest, to excite that laugh!

When the company is disposed to attack your principles with drollery, no plea for them is attended to; the more serious you shew yourself in their defence, the more scope you give to the mirth of your opponents.

How well soever we have informed ourselves of the motives to a right conduct, these motives are not attended to, as often as we act: our ordinary practice is founded on the impression, that a former consideration of them has made; which impression is very liable to be weakened—wants frequently to be renewed in the same way, that it was at first produced.

When we continually hear our virtue bantered as mere prejudice, and our notions of honour and decorum treated as the sole effects of our pride being dexterously flattered—When our piety is frequently subjecting us to be derided as childishly timorous, or absurdly superstitious; we soon know not how to persuade ourselves, that we are not more scrupulous than we need to be; we begin to question, whether, in settling the extent of our obligations, we have sufficiently consulted the

imperfections

imperfections of our nature—whether our judgment is without its bias from our fears.

Let our seriousness be exhibited to us in that odd figure, which wit and humour can easily give it; we shall be insensibly led to judge of it, according to its appearance, as thus overcharged; and under the disadvantage, in which it is shewn us: we shall, first, seem unconcerned at the greater liberties that others take, and, by degrees, proceed to take the very same ourselves.

The person, whom we most highly and justly honoured, if the buffoonry of our companions were constantly levelled at him, would soon have his worth overlooked by us; and, though we might not be brought to think of him as contemptibly as they appeared to do, our reverence of him would certainly, at length abate, and both his advice and example have much less influence upon us.

Of this you shall have an instance in my next.

I will here only add what *Jamblichus* mentions as practised by *Pythagoras*, before he admitted any into his school—He enquired, “Who were their intimates?”—justly concluding, that they, who could like bad companions, would not be much profited by his instructions.

Dean Bolton.

§ 127. LETTER VIII.

SIR,

What follows will discharge the promise, which I made you at the conclusion of my last.

S. was the oracle of his county; to whatever point he turned his thoughts, he soon made himself master of it. He entered, indeed, so early upon business, that he had little time for books; but he had read those, which best deserved his perusal, and his memory was the faithful repository of their contents.

The helps, that he had not received from reading, he had abundantly supplied the want of, by observation and conversation.

The compass of his knowledge was amazing. There was scarce any thing, of which one in his station ought to be informed, wherein he appeared to be ignorant. Long experience, great sagacity, a ready apprehension, a retentive memory, the resort to him of all sorts of people, from whom any thing could be learned, and an intimacy with some of the worthiest persons of every profession, enabled him to

speak on most points with such justness and copiousness, as might induce you to conclude, upon first being with him, that the topic, on which his discourse turned, was what he had particularly and principally attended to. Though he owned himself never to have so much as looked into the writings of atheists or deists; yet, from the promiscuous company he had been obliged to keep, and the freedom with which all spoke their sentiments to him, there was not, perhaps, a material objection to the Christian religion, of which he was not apprised, and which he had not well considered.

Sensible of his strength, and ever desirous to use it in the best of causes—in the service of that truth, which operates on men's practice, and would, if attended to, rectify it throughout; he did not discourage the most free speakers: he calmly and willingly heard what they could say against his faith, while they used reason and argument; but drollery and jest he failed not, though with great good-humour, to reprove, as a species of misrepresentation—as a sure evidence, that truth was not sought—as an artifice, to which none would apply, who were not conscious of their weakness, who did not despair of supporting their notions by rational proofs.

Virtue and true religion had not, perhaps, an abler advocate than this gentleman; but whatever service his tongue might do them, his manners, certainly, did them far greater: he convinced you of their *excellency*, by exhibiting to your senses their *effects*—he left you no room to question how amiable they were when it was from *their* influence upon him, that he so much engaged your esteem and affection; he proved undeniably, how much they should be our *care*, by being himself an instance, how much they contributed to our *happiness*.

Never, certainly, did piety sit easier upon any man—Never, perhaps, was any man more esteemed by the very persons, between whose practice and his there was the widest difference.

The superior talents he discovered, and his readiness to employ them for the benefit of all, who applied to him, engaged alike their admiration and their love.

The obligations, conferred by him, obtained the height of complaisance towards his *son*. Invitations were made the youth from all quarters; and there was not a young man of any figure near him, who

was

was not introduced to him, and directed to pay him particular civility. They, who sought to attach him closest to them by consulting his humour, were never without their arguments for *licensing* it. "True it was, this or that *pursuit* might not be to the taste of his father; but neither did it suit his years—When he was a young man, he undoubtedly, acted as one; he took the diversions, allowed himself in the gratifications, to which youth inclines: no wonder that he should now censure what he could not relish—that he should condemn the draught, which his head could not bear, and be indifferent to the features, which he could not distinguish without his spectacles."

When this kind of language had abated the reverence due to so excellent an instructor, the buffoon interposed still further to weaken his influence; gave an air of affectation to his decorum—of hypocrisy to his seriousness—of timorousness to his prudence—of avarice to his wise œconomy—burlesqued the *advice*, that he might be supposed to give, the arguments with which he was likely to support it, and the reproof he would naturally use, when he did not see a disposition to follow it.

Soon as the young man had attained the age, at which the law supposes us sufficiently discreet, he expressed a most earnest desire to have an opportunity of appearing *so*. Repeated promises were made, that if a proper allowance was settled on him, and leave given him to chuse a place of abode, there should not be the least mismanagement; the income assigned him should answer every article of expence.

The son's importunity was seconded by the fond mother's, and their joint solicitations prevailed. The youth was now accessible, at all times, to the most profligate of his acquaintance: and one part of their entertainment usually was, to set his excellent father's maxims and manners in the most disadvantageous light. This failed not to bring on a disregard to both—so entire a disregard to them that the whore and the card-table took up all the hours which the bottle relieved nor.

Thus fell the heir of one of the worthiest of our countrymen!—It was to no purpose, that such an admirable example had been set him by the person he was most likely to regard—that such particular care had been taken to reason him into a discharge of his duty—that he had been present, when the most subtle advocates for irre-

ligion either were silenced, or induced to acknowledge their principles to be much less defensible, than they had hitherto thought them. None of the impressions of what had been done for him, or said to him, or had passed before him, could hold out against ridicule; it effaced every trace of them, and prepared him to be as bad, as his worst companions could be inclined to make him. How great a neglect of him ensued! They who had laughed him out of the reverence due to his parent's worth, rendered him soon despised by all whose esteem could profit or credit him; and he died in the 70th year of his constitution, when but in the 25th of his age.

Dean Bolton.

§ 128. LETTER IX.

SIR,

My last gave you a melancholy instance of the hurt done by *ridicule* to the heir of a most worthy man, not many miles from you. What influence it had towards the condemnation of him, to whom the epithet of *divine* might, perhaps, be more properly applied, than to any one who ever lived under the sole guidance of reason, has long, you know, been matter of dispute. I will only observe, concerning the comic writer's ridicule of *Socrates*—

1. That, when such a representation could be made of so excellent a person, it demonstrates, that no degree of worth can secure any person from an attempt to destroy his credit; and that they, whose capacities fully enable them to discern this worth, may be its spitefullest enemies, and bend their wits to disparage it—

2. That, when such a representation could be made by a man of good parts, with any confidence of success, it is, further, an evidence of the probability, that the highest and most just reputation may suffer from ridicule, and that it may bring into contempt what is entitled to the greatest esteem and honour—

3. That if the *Athenians* were so well pleased with the means used to lessen the character of this ornament, not only to his country, but his species, as to render the interposition of a powerful party in the state necessary, to prevent the poet's abuse from meeting with all the success he promised himself in it; we are fully taught, what may be the pernicious effects of ingenious drollery—how much it may weaken the force of any instruction, or any example.

Where

Where violent methods are pursued, in order to withdraw us from any religious *practice or opinion*; they who thus oppose it shewing thereby, that *they* look upon *it* as somewhat of great importance, teach *us* to do the same; and often increase our attachment to *it*—render us more earnest about *it*, than we otherwise should have been. But where such *practice or opinion* is treated as a matter of jest—where it meets with all the slight that scoffing and laughter can express, we scarcely know how to preserve our regard to it, as a thing of much consequence; and from esteeming it of little moment, we easily proceed to judge it of none at all.

The *force* that is offered us, on account of our persuasion, either occasions such an aversion from him, who applies to it, as prevents his having any influence upon us; or engages us in so careful an attention to the grounds, upon which we formed our judgment, as fixes us in the resolution not to alter it. But when all passes under the appearance of good humour—when only mirth and pleasantry are exerted against us, we neither contract that hatred towards those, by whom we are thus treated, which will be our security from any bad impressions they can make upon us; nor are we excited to any examination of our *principles* that can confirm us in *them*. The freedom which our companions use, in sporting with what we have hitherto revered, will tempt us to conclude, that its importance is far from being obvious; nor, indeed, can it fail, unless our minds have a more than ordinary firmness, to raise at length some doubt in us, whether we have not been too fanciful or too credulous. And as

“The woman, who deliberates, is lost;”

we may fear the man will be so likewise, who suffers himself to question how well founded his seriousness is, merely because his associates are continually deriding it.

Would you not, industriously, keep out of the way of those who had power to torture you, and whom you knew ready to do it; if you would not be guided by them, but was determined to think and act as your own reason should direct? Believe me, Sir, the scoffer should be as much shunned by the friend of virtue, as the inquisitor by the friend of truth. Whoever would attain or preserve a just sense of his duty, should have as little intercourse as

possible with those who would discourage sincerity—who would oppose it, either by the faggot, or the fair, * of *Smithfield*. A very uncommon resolution is required to be steady to the principles, from avowing which we must expect to be the heroes in a farce; though we need not apprehend that it will make us victims to the flames.

What *your* temper may be, I cannot affirm; but I really think that, with great numbers, drollery is not only a species of persecution, but the most dangerous kind of it: they would as soon be scourged, as mocked; be burthened with the cross, as habited with the purple. You can scarcely be enough aware of the risk you run from being jelled with, as a visionary or a bigot—as one of much whim, or very little penetration.

But enough of the inducements, that vicious companions would be under to corrupt you, and the means they would use to do it.

The care you should take, in the choice of your company, will be the subject of but one letter more from *Dean Bolton*.

§ 129. LETTER X.

SIR,

All I have to add, on what has lately been the subject of my correspondence with you, will be contained in this letter. I will not lengthen it, by apologizing for it.

Might I suppose you so fortified by a right disposition, a wise education, good sense, and a thorough knowledge of the reasonableness of the practice enjoined by your religion, that every attempt to corrupt your morals would miscarry; this hurt, however, you would be sure to find from being much in the company of vicious men, that you would be less careful to become *eminently virtuous*—you would be less careful to fulfil your obligations, than you otherwise would be. While you saw *others* so much worse than yourself; you would not consider how much better you ought to be, than you at present are—While *their* gross faults were avoided, you would not consider, how much there is in *you* that ought to be amended.

We measure what is, in any way, commendable, by comparing our share of it with that of our neighbour: we do not re-

* *Barbomew fair*, during which plays and farces were formerly, from morning to night, the entertainment of the populace.

gard in what degree, as to itself, we possess the good, but in how greater a degree it is possessed by us, than by others.

Among a very ignorant people, a scholar of the lowest form will pass, both in their and his own judgment, for an adept.

You would, I am sure, pronounce of any gentleman, who kept mean company, that there was little hope of his ever acting a part, which would greatly credit him: while he loved to be chiefly with those, who would own, and do homage to, his superiority; you would think him by no means likely to cultivate much real worth. And were it to be said, that you should make such a judgment of him, not because of any impression he would receive from his companions, but because of the disposition he shewed in the choice of them; I should be glad to know, how that man must be thought affected towards religion and virtue, who could be willingly present, where he was sure that they would be grossly depreciated. Whoever could bear a disparagement of them, must have so little sense of their worth, that we must justly conclude him ill prepared for resisting the attempt, to deprive them wholly of their influence upon him. And, therefore, we may as fully determine, from the disposition evidenced by him who keeps *bad* company, what his morals will at length be; as we can determine from the turn of mind, discovered by one who keeps *mean* company, what his figure in the world is likely to be.

Those among us, whose capacities qualify them for the most considerable attainments—who might raise themselves to an equality with the heroes in literature, of the last century, sit down contented with the superiority they have over their contemporaries—acquiesce in furnishing a bare specimen of what they could do, if their genius were roused, if they were to exert their abilities. They regard only the advantage they possess over the idle and illiterate, by whom they are surrounded; and give way to their ease, when they may take it; and yet appear as considerable in their times, as the learned men, we most admire, did in their respective ages.

How many could I mention, to whom nature has been most liberal of her endowments, who are barely in the list of authors, who have only writ enough to shew how much honour they would have done their country, had their application been called out, and if their names must have

been no better known than those of their acquaintance, unless their diligence had equalled their capacity.

What is thus notoriously true of literary desert, is equally so of moral: the persons, to whom we allot a greater share of it, than has long been found in any in their stations, how have they their sense of right withheld from exerting itself, by the few they meet with disposed to animate them to any endeavour towards correcting the general depravity—by the connections they have with such numbers, whose rule is their inclination—by that utter disregard to duty, which they see in most of those with whom they have an intercourse.

Alas! in the very best of us, a conviction of what becomes us goes but a little way in exciting us to practice it. Solicitations to be less observant of it are, from some or other quarter, perpetually offering themselves: and are by no means likely to be withstood, if our resolutions are not strengthened by the wise counsels and correspondent examples of our associates.

“Behold! young man—You live in an age, when it is requisite to fortify the mind by examples of constancy.”

This *Tacitus* mentions as the speech of the admirable *Thrasea* to the quæstor, sent to tell him he must die; and by whom he would have it remarked, with what composure he died.

Nor is it only when our virtue endangers our life, as was then the case, that such examples are wanted. Wherever there is a prevailing corruption of manners; they who would act throughout the becoming part, must be animated to it by what they hear from, and see in, others; by the patterns of integrity which they have before them.

We are easily induced to judge some deviation from our rule very excusable; and to allow ourselves in it: when our thoughts are not called off from our own weakness and the general guilt: but while we are conversant with those, whose conduct is as unsuitable, as our own, to that of the multitude; we are kept awake to a sense of our obligations—our spirits are supported—we feel the courage that we behold—we see what can be done by such as share our frail nature; and we are ashamed to waver, where they persevere.

Aristotle considers friendship as of three kinds; one arising from virtue, another from pleasure, and another from interest; but justly determines, that there can be no true

true friendship, which is not founded in virtue.

The friendship contracted from pleasure or profit, regards only the pleasure or profit obtained thereby; and ceases, when these precarious motives to it fail: but that, to which virtue gives birth, not having any accidental cause—being without any dependance on humour or interest—arising wholly from intrinsic worth, from what we are in ourselves, never fluctuates, operates steadily and uniformly, remains firm and uninterrupted, is lasting as our lives. That which is the essential qualification of a *friend*, should be the chief recommendation in a *companion*. If, indeed, we have any concern for real worth: with whom should we be more desirous to converse, than with those who would accompany us, and encourage us, in the pursuit of it.

The same writer, mentioning the use that friends are of to us in every part of life, remarks the benefit which young men find from them to be—"That they keep them in their duty."

Had he thought, that any thing could have been urged more in behalf of friendship; he, undoubtedly, would have observed it. And when such is the language of so able an instructor, and of one who guided himself in his instructions only by the certain, the present advantage, that would attend a conformity to them; the lesson we have here for the choice of company must appear worthy the notice even of those, who will have no other guides but reason and nature.

If to keep us steady to our duty be the best office that can be done us—If they, who are our friends, will be thus serviceable to us—If the virtuous alone can be our friends, our conversation should be chiefly with the virtuous; all familiarity with the vicious should be avoided; we should consider those, who would destroy our virtue, as our enemies—our very worst enemies, whilst endeavouring to deprive us of the greatest blessing, that it is in our power to obtain.

Dean Bolton.

§ 130. On Intemperance in Eating.

S E C T. I.

This respects the quantity of our food, or the kind of it: if, in either of these, we have no regard to the hurt it may do us, we are guilty of intemperance.

From transgressing in the quantity of our food, a speedier mischief ensues than

from doing so in the quality of it; and therein we never can transgress, without being directly admonished of it by our very constitution. Our meal is never too large, but heaviness comes on—the load on our stomach is our instant tormentor; and every repetition of our fault a caution to us, that we do not any more thus offend. A caution, alas, how unheeded by us!—*Crammed like an Englishman*, was, I find, a proverbial expression in *Erasmus's* days—above two hundred years ago.

An error barely in the kind of our aliment gives us, frequently, no present alarm; and, perhaps, but a very slight one, after we have, for some years, continued in it. In the vigour of youth, scarce any thing we eat appears to disagree with us: we gratify our palate with whatever pleases it; feeling no ill consequence, and therefore fearing none. The inconveniences, that we do not yet find, we hope we shall always escape; or we then propose to ourselves a restraint upon our appetite, when we experience the bad effects of indulging it.

With respect to the quantity of our food; that may be no excess in one man, which may be the most blameable in another: what would be the height of gluttony in us, if of a weak and tender frame, may be, to persons of much stronger constitution, a quite temperate meal. The same proportions of food can, likewise, never suit such, as have in them dispositions to particular diseases, and such, as have no evils of that nature to guard against: nor can they, further, suit those, who are employed in hard labour, and those, who live wholly at their ease—those, who are frequently stirring and in action, and those, whose life is sedentary and inactive. The same man may, also, in the very same quantity, be free from, or guilty of excess, as he is young or old—healthy or diseased—as he accustoms his body to fatigue, or to repose.

The influence that our food has upon our health, its tendency to preserve or to impair our constitution, is the measure of its temperance or excess.

It may, indeed, so happen, that our diet shall be, generally, very sparing, without allowing us any claim to the virtue of temperance; as when we are more desirous to save our money, than to please our palates, and, therefore, deny ourselves at our own table, what we eat with greediness, when we feed at the charge of others, as,

like-

likewise, when our circumstances not permitting us, ordinarily, to indulge our appetite, we yet set no bounds to it, when we have an opportunity of gratifying it.

He is the temperate man, whose health directs his appetite—who is best pleased with what best agrees with him—who eats, not to gratify his taste, but to preserve his life—who is the same at every table, as at his own—who, when he feasts, is not cloyed; and sees all the delicacies before him, that luxury can accumulate; yet preserves a due abstinence amidst them.

The rules of temperance not only oblige us to abstain from what *now* does, or what we are sure *soon* will, hurt us: we offend against them, when we avoid not whatever has a *probability* of being hurtful to us.—They are, further, transgressed by too great nicety about our food—by much solicitude and eagerness to procure what we most relish—by frequently eating to satiety.

We have a letter remaining of an heathen, who was one of the most eminent persons in an age distinguished by the great men it produced, in which he expresses how uneasy it made him, to be among those, who placed no small part of their happiness in an elegant table, and who filled themselves twice a day.

In thus describing temperance, let me not be understood to censure, as a failure therein, all regard to the food that best pleases us, when it is equally wholesome with other kinds—when its price is neither unsuitable to our circumstances, nor very great—when it may be conveniently procured—when we are not anxious about it—when we do not frequently seek after it—when we are always moderate in its use.

To govern our appetite is necessary; but, in order to this, there is no necessity, that we should always mortify it—that we should, upon every occasion, consider what is least agreeable to us.

Life is no more to be passed in a constant self-denial, than in a round of sensual enjoyments. We should endeavour, that we may not be, at any time, painful to us; to deny ourselves what is improper for us; and, on that as well as other accounts, it is not fitting that we should frequently practise self-denial—that we should often forego what would delight us. But to do this continually, I cannot suppose required of us; because it doth not seem reasonable to think that it should be our duty wholly

to debar ourselves of that food which our palate is *formed* to relish, and which we are sure may be used, without any prejudice to our virtue, or our health.

Thus much may suffice to inform us, when we incur the guilt of eating intemperately.

The dissuaves from it, that appear of greatest weight, are these:

It is the grossest abuse of the gifts of Providence.

It is the vilest debasement of ourselves.

Our bodies owe to it the most painful diseases, and, generally, a speedy decay.

It frequently interrupts the use of our nobler faculties, and is sure, at length, greatly to enfeeble them.

The straits to which it often reduces us, occasion our falling into crimes, which would, otherwise, have been our utter abhorrence.

Dean Bolton.

§ 131. On Intemperance in Eating.

SECT. II.

To consider, first, excess in our food as the grossest abuse of the gifts of Providence.

The vast variety of creatures, with which God has replenished the earth—the abundant provision, which he has made for many of them—the care, which he has taken that each species of them should be preserved—the numerous conveniences they administer to us—the pleasing change of food they afford us—the suitable food that we find, among their different kinds, to different climates, to our different ways of life, ages, constitutions, distempers, are, certainly, the most awakening call to the highest admiration, and the gratefullest *sense*, of the divine wisdom and goodness. This sense is properly expressed, by the due application of what is so graciously afforded us—by the application of it to those purposes, for which it was manifestly intended. But how contrary hereto is his practice, who lives as it were but to eat, and considers the liberality of Providence only as catering for his luxury! What mischief this luxury doth us will be presently considered; and, in whatsoever degree it hurts us, we to such a degree abuse our Maker's bounty, which *must* design our good—which, certainly, is directed to our welfare. Were we, by indulging our appetites, only to make ourselves less fit for any of the offices of life, only to become less capable of discharging any of the duties of our station, it may be made evident,

that, in this respect likewise, our use of the Divine beneficence is quite contrary to what it requires. He who has appointed us our business here—who, by our peculiar capacities, has signified to us our proper employments, thereby discovers to us how far merely to please ourselves is allowed us; and that, if we do so, to the hindrance of a nobler work, it is opposing his intention; it is defeating the end of life, by those very gifts, which were bestowed to carry us on more cheerfully towards it.

When my palate has a large scope for its innocent choice—when I have at hand what may most agreeably recruit my strength, and what is most effectual to preserve it; how great ingratitude and baseness shew themselves in the excess, which perverts the aim of so much kindness, and makes *that* to be the cause of my forgetting with what view I was created, which ought to keep me ever mindful of it! As the bounty of Heaven is one of the strongest motives to a *reasonable life*, how guilty are we if we abuse it to the purposes of a *sensual*? Our crime must be highly aggravated, when the more conveniences our Maker has provided for us, we are so much the more unmindful of the task he has enjoined us—when by his granting us what may satisfy our appetite, we are induced wholly to consult it, and make ourselves slaves to it.

Let intemperance in our food be next considered, as the shamefullest debasement of ourselves.

Life, as we have been wisely taught to consider it, is *more than meat*. Man could not be sent into the world but for quite different purposes, than merely to indulge his palate. He has an understanding given him, which he may greatly improve; many are the perfections, which he is qualified to attain; much good to his fellow-creatures he has abilities to do: and all this may be truly said of all mankind; all of us may improve our reason, may proceed in virtue, may be useful to our fellow-creatures. There are none, therefore, to whom it is not the foulest reproach, that their belly is their God—that they are more solicitous to favour, and thereby to strengthen, the importunity of their appetite, than to weaken and master it, by frequent resistance and restraint. The reasonable being is to be always under the influence of reason; it is his excellence, his prerogative, to be so: whatever is an hindrance to this degrades him, reflects on him disgrace and contempt. And as our

reason and appetite are in a constant opposition to each other, there is no indulging the latter, without lessening the power of the former: If our appetite is not governed by, it will govern, our reason, and make its most prudent suggestions, its wisest counsels, to be unheeded and slighted.

The fewer the wants of any being are, we must consider it as so much the more perfect; since thereby it is less dependent, and has less of its happiness without itself. When we raise our thoughts to the Beings above us, we cannot but attribute to the higher orders of them, still farther removes from our own weakness and indigence, till we reach God himself, and exempt him from wants of every kind.

Knowing thus what must be ascribed to natures superior to ours, we cannot be ignorant, what is our own best recommendation; by what our nature is raised; wherein its worth is distinguished.

To be without any wants is the Divine prerogative; our praise is, that we add not to the number of those, to which we were appointed—that we have none we can avoid—that we have none from our own misconduct. In this we attain the utmost degree of perfection within our reach.

On the other hand, when fancy has multiplied our necessities—when we owe I know not how many to ourselves—when our ease is made dependent on delicacies, to which our Maker never subjected it—when the cravings of our luxury bear no proportion to those of our natural hunger, what a degenerate race do we become! What do we but sink our rank in the creation.

He whose voraciousness prevents his being satisfied, till he is loaded to the full of what he is able to bear, who eats to the utmost extent of what he can eat, is a mere brute, and one of the lowest kind of brutes; the generality of them observing a just moderation in their food—when duly relieved seeking no more, and forbearing even what is before them. But below any brute is he, who, by indulging himself, has contracted wants, from which nature exempted him; who must be made hungry by art, must have his food undergo the most unwholesome preparations, before he can be inclined to taste it; only relishing what is ruinous to his health; his life supported by what necessarily shortens it. A part this; which, when acted by him, who has reason, reflection, foresight given him, wants a name to represent it in the full of its deformity. With privileges so far beyond

yond those of the creatures below us, how great is our baseness, our guilt, if those endowments are so far abused, that they serve us but to find out the means of more grossly corrupting ourselves!

I cannot quit this head, without remarking it to be no slight argument of the dishonour we incur by gluttony, that nothing is more carefully avoided in all well-bred company, nothing would be thought by such more brutal and rude, than the discovery of any marks of our having eat intemperately—of our having exceeded that proportion of food, which is proper for our nourishment.

Dean Bolton.

§ 132. On Intemperance in Eating.

SECT. III.

To consider, further, excess in our food as hastening our death, and bringing on us the most painful diseases.

It is evident, that nothing contributes more to the preservation of life, than temperance.

Experience proves it to be actually so; and the structure of the human body shews that it must be so.

They who describe the golden age, or the age of innocence, and near a thousand years of life, represent the customary food of it as the plainest and most simple.

Whether animal food was at all used before the flood, is questioned: we certainly find, long after it, that *Lot's* making a feast is described by his baking unleavened bread.

Abraham entertained those, whom he considered of such eminence, as that, to use the words of scripture, "he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself to the ground;" *Abraham's* entertainment, I say, of persons thus honoured by him, was only with a calf, with cakes of meal, with butter and milk.

Gideon's hospitality towards the most illustrious of guests shewed itself in killing a kid of the goats; and we read that *Jesse* looked upon this to be a present, which his prince would not disdain.

Perhaps my reader would rather take a meal with some of the worthies of profane history, than with those, whom the sacred has recorded.

I will be his introducer. He shall be a guest at an entertainment, which was, certainly, designed to be a splendid one; since it was made by *Achilles* for three such considerable persons, as *Phœnix*, *Ajax*, and *Rhysus*; persons, whom he himself repre-

sents as being, of all the *Græcian* chiefs, those whom he most honours.

He will easily be believed herein; for this declaration is scarce sooner out of his mouth, than he and his friends, *Patroclus* and *Automedon*, severally employ themselves in making up the fire—chopping the meat, and putting it into the pot—Or, if *Mr. Pope* be allowed to describe their tasks on this occasion.

—*Patroclus* o'er the blazing fire
Heaps in a brazen vase three *chines* entire:
The brazen vase *Automedon* sustains,
Which *flesh of porker, sheep, and goat* contains:
Achilles at the genial feast presides,
The parts transfixes, and with skill divides.
Mean while *Patroclus* sweats the fire to raise;
The tent is brighten'd with the rising blaze.

But who is dressing the fish and fowls? This feast, alas! furnishes neither. The poet is so very bad a caterer, that he provides nothing of that kind for his heroes on this occasion; or, on another, even for the luxurious *Phæacians*. Such samples these of *Homer's* entertainments, as will gain entire credit to what is said of them in *Plutarch*, "that we must rise almost hungry from them." *Symp. Lib. II. Qu. 10.*

Should the blind bard be considered as a stroller—keeping low company, and therefore, in the feasts he makes for the great, likely more to regard the quantity of the food which he provides for them, than the kind of it: would you rather be one of *Virgil's* guests, as he lived in an age, when good eating was understood—conversed with people of rank—knew what dishes they liked, and would therefore not fail to place such before them?

You shall then be the guest of the *Roman* poet—Do you chuse beef, or mutton—would you be helped to pork, or do you prefer goat's-flesh? You have no stomach for such sort of diet. He has nothing else for you, unless *Polyphemus* will spare you a leg or an arm of one of the poor *Greeks* he is eating; or unless you will join the half-drowned crew, and take a bit of the stags, which are dressed as soon as killed; or unless you are a great lover of bread and apples, and in order to satisfy your hunger, will, in the language of *Africanus*, eat your table.

Dido, indeed, gives *Æneas* and his companions a most splendid entertainment, as far as numerous attendants constitute one; but the poet mentions nothing, that the heroes had to eat, except bread; whatever else was got for them, he includes in the general term *Dapes*; which, in other parts

of the *Æneid*, is applied to all the coarse fare already mentioned.

As the luxury of mankind increased, their lives shortened: The half of *Abraham's* age became regarded as a stretch, far beyond the customary period. So in profane history we find, that when the arts of luxury were unknown in *Rome*, its seven kings reigned a longer term, than, afterwards, upon the prevalency of those arts, was completed by its first twenty emperors.

Such persons, indeed, among the ancients, whose precepts and practice most recommended temperance in diet, were eminent instances of the benefit accruing from it, in the health preserved, and long life attained by it.

Gorgias lived 107 years.

Hippocrates reached, according to some writers, his 104th year, according to others his 109th.

Pythagoras, of whom it was observed, that he was never known to eat to satiety, lived to near 100 years; if *Jamblichus* may be credited. *D. Laertius* says, that according to most writers he was, when he lost his life, in his 90th year. Out of his school came *Empedocles*, who lived, as some say, to 109; and *Xenophilus*, who lived to above 105.

Zeno lived to 98: his disciple and successor *Cleanthes* to 99.

Diogenes, when he died, was about 90.

Plato reach'd his 81st year; and his follower *Xenocrates* his 84th.

Lycargus, the lawgiver of the *Lacedæmonians*, who, when they obeyed his laws, were not less distinguished by their abstemiousness than by their fortitude, lived to 85; and their King *Agésilas* took pay of *Tachos* at 80; afterwards assisted *Nectanebus*; and, having established him in his kingdom, died, in his return to *Sparta* at 84.

Cato, the Censor, is introduced by *Tully* representing himself as, when in his 84th year, able to assist in the senate—to speak in the assembly of the people, and to give his friends and dependents the assistance, which they might want from him.

Lucian introduces his account of long-lived persons, with the observation, that it might be of use, as shewing that they, who took the most care of their bodies and minds, lived the longest, and enjoyed the best health.

To come nearer to our own times: the discovery of a new world has confirmed the

observations furnished by the old; that in those countries, where the greatest simplicity of diet has been used, the greatest length of life has been attained.

Of the ancient inhabitants of *Virginia* we are told, "That their chief dish was maize, and that they drank only water: That their diseases were few, and chiefly proceeded from excessive heats or colds." *Atl. Geog.* vol. v. p. 711. "Some of them lived to upwards of 200 years." *PURCHAS*, vol. v. p. 946. "The sobriety of the ancient inhabitants of *Florida* lengthen'd their lives in such sort, that one of their kings, says *Morgagni*, told me, he was three hundred years old; and his father, whom he then shewed me alive, was fifty years older than himself." *PURCHAS*, vol. v. p. 961.

And if we now search after particular instances of persons reaching to extreme old age, it is certain that we must not resort for them to courts and palaces; to the dwellings of the great or the wealthy; but to the cells of the religious, or to cottages; to the habitations of such, whose hunger is their sauce, and to whom a wholesome meal is a sufficiently delicate one.

Martha Waterhouse, of the township of *Norh Bierley* in *Yorkshire*, died about the year 1711, in the 104th year of her age: her maiden sister, *Hester Jager*, of the same place, died in 1713, in the 107th year of her age. They had both of them relief from the township of *Bierley* nigh fifty years. *Abridgment of Phil. Transf.* by *JONES*, vol. ii. p. 2. p. 115.

Dr. Harvey, in his anatomical account of *T. Parr*, who died in the 153d year of his age, says—that, if he had not changed his diet and air, he might, perhaps, have lived a good while longer. His diet was old cheese, milk, coarse bread, small beer, and whey.

Dr. T. Robinson says of *H. Jenkins*, the fisherman, who lived 169 years, that his diet was coarse and sour.

Dr. M. Lister, having mentioned several old persons of *Craven* in *Yorkshire*, says— "The food of all this mountainous country is exceeding coarse. *Abstr. of Phil. Transf.* by *LOWTHORP*, vol. iii. p. 507, &c.

Buchanan speaks of a fisherman in his own time, who married at 100, went out in his little fishing boat in the roughest weather at 140, and at last did not die of any painful distemper, but merely worn out by age. *Rev. Scot. Hist.* lib. i. ad. fin.

Plutarch mentions our countrymen at,

in his time, growing old at 120. To account for this, as he does, from their climate, seems less rational than to ascribe it to their way of living, as related by *Dionysius Siculus*, who tell us—that their diet was simple, and that they were utter strangers to the delicate fare of the wealthy.

In our several neighbourhoods we all of us see, that they who least consult their appetite, who least give way to its wantonness or voraciousness, attain, generally, to years far exceeding theirs, who deny themselves nothing they can relish, and conveniently procure.

Human life, indeed, being exposed to so many thousand accidents, its end being hastened by such a prodigious diversity of means, there is no care we can take of ourselves, in any one respect, that will be our effectual preservative; but, allowing for casualties and difference in constitutions, we every where perceive, that the age of those, who neglect the rules of temperance, is of a much shorter date than theirs, by whom these rules are carefully followed.

And if we attend to our structure, it must thence be evident that it cannot be otherwise.

Dean Bolton.

§ 133. On Intemperance in Eating.

SECT. IV.

The human body may be considered as composed of a great variety of tubes, in which their proper fluid is in a perpetual motion. Our health is according to the condition, in which these vessels and this fluid are.

The ruptured, or too relaxed, or too rigid state of the one; and the redundancy or deficiency, the resolved or viscid, the acedent or the putrescent state of the other, is a disorder in our frame. Whether our excess be in the quantity or quality of aliment, we must suffer by it, *in some or other of these ways*.

By the stomach being frequently loaded, that fulness of the vessels ensues, by which the fibres are weakened—the circulation becomes languid—perspiration is lessened—obstructions are formed—the humours become viscid and soon putrid.

In the progress to this last state, different diseases take place, according to the general strength or weakness of the solids, or according to the debility of some particular organ; according to the constitution of the air; according to our rest or motion; according to the warmth in which we keep, or

the cold, to which we expose ourselves, &c.

Excess may be in the quantity of our food, not only when we eat so as to burthen the stomach; but, likewise, when our meals bear not a just proportion to our labour or exercise,

We are tempted to exceed in the quantity of our food, by the seasoning of it, or by the variety of it.

The stimulus of sauce serves but to excite a false appetite—to make us eat much more than we should do, if our diet were quite simple.

The effect is the same, when our meal is composed of several kinds of food: their different tastes are so many inducements to excess, as they are so many provocations to eat beyond what will satisfy our natural wants.

And thus, tho' we were never to touch a dish, which had its relish from any the least unwholesome ingredient; tho' our diet were the plainest, and nothing came ever before us, that had any other elegance than from the season, in which it was brought to our table, or the place in which it appeared there; we yet might greatly hurt ourselves: we might be as intemperate, and as speedily destroy ourselves by our intemperance with roast and boiled meat, as with fricassees and ragouts.

The quality of our aliment may be mischievous to us, either as universally prejudicial to the human constitution, or as unsuitable to our own;—unsuitable to the weakness of our whole frame, or to some defect in the formation of a part of it, or to that taint we have in us, from the diseases or vices of our parents.

We may be greatly prejudiced by the kind of our food, in many other ways; and we, ordinarily, are so, by not regarding what agrees with the climate, in which we are—what with the country we inhabit—what with the manner of life we lead.

From the great heat that spices occasion, and from the length of time they continue it, we may truly say, that their copious and daily use in food must be injurious to all constitutions.

So for salted meats, the hurt that may be feared from them, when they are our constant meals, is easily collected, from the irritation they must cause in their passage thro' the body—from the injury, that must hence ensue to its finer membranes—from the numerous acrid particles, that must thereby be lodged in the pores of the skin, the obstructions which this must produce, and

the large quantity of perspirable matter which will, therefore, be detained in, and, consequently, greatly foul the blood—from the dreadful symptoms, that attend a high degree of the scurvy; the relief of which by vegetables, by fresh meat, by liquids fittest to remove the effects of a muriatic cause, plainly shews them to be owing to such a cause.

Whatever has the haut-gout may be looked upon as consisting of such active particles, as cannot but make our frequent eating of it very dangerous—as must render it much fitter to be used as physic, than as food.

From a mixture of meats, each of them wholesome in its kind, a bad chyle may be formed: and the rule in physic is, that an error in the first digestion will not be mended in the second.

A delicate constitution is, speedily, either quite destroyed, or irrecoverably disordered, when the diet is not exactly adapted to it—is not such as least irritates, as least heats, as is most easily concocted, as soonest passes out of the body, and leaves the fewest impurities behind it there.

The weakness, or the wrong formation, of a part of our frame is, generally, a call to the utmost care about our food; and as our observing this may extend our life, even under either of those circumstances, as far as we could have hoped it would have been prolonged, if we had been without any such defect; so our failure therein may, in a very short time, be fatal to us.

The most simple aliment will, perhaps, be unable to hinder our feeling, in some degree, the bad consequences of the diseases, or irregularities of our parents: but how far they shall affect us, depends, very often, in a great measure, upon ourselves.

They may neither much contract the term, nor much interrupt the comfort, of life, if we will make hunger our sauce, and, in every meal we eat, regard the distempers we inherit; but early, alas! and heavy will our sufferings be, our years few and full of uneasiness, when, without any such regard, our taste is directed by that of the sound and athletic—when the solicitations of *appetite* lead us to forget the reasons we have to restrain it.

In this climate and country, where, for so many months in the year, the cuticular discharges are so small—where the air so often, so suddenly, and to so great a degree, varies its equilibrium, and where our

vessels, therefore, are as frequently, as suddenly, and as greatly contracted or expanded—where fogs so much abound, and so much contribute to impair the elasticity of our fibres—to hinder the proper both secretions and excretions—to destroy the due texture of the blood, and vitiate our whole habit, it must be obvious, what we have to fear, when our aliment hurts us in the same way with our air—when the one heightens the disorder, to which we are exposed by the other.

An inattention to the nutriment fit for us, when we seldom use any exercise, or, always, very gentle—when our life is sedentary, either from the business by which we maintain ourselves, or from our love of ease, or from our literary pursuits, is perhaps, as fatal to us, as almost any instance of wrong conduct, with which we can be chargeable. By high feeding and little or no exercise, we are not only exposed to the most dangerous diseases, but we make all diseases dangerous: we make those so, which would, otherwise, be slight and easily removed—we do not only subject ourselves to the particular maladies, which have their rise wholly from luxury, but we render ourselves more liable to those, which have no connexion with it. We, then, are among the first, who are seized with the distempers, which the constitution of the air occasions.—We are most apt to receive all those of the infectious kind—We take cold whence we might least fear it; and find its immediate consequence, a malignant or an inflammatory fever, or some other disease equally to be dreaded.

A writer in physic of the first rank asserts, that our diet is the chief cause of all our diseases—that other causes only take effect from the disposition of our body, and the state of its humours.

There is, I am persuaded, much truth in this assertion. For, as in countries, where the inhabitants greatly indulge themselves, few die of old age; so where a strict temperance is observed, few die but of old age. We find, likewise, persons, as *Socrates* for instance, who, by their regular living, have preserved themselves from the infection of a disease, that has made the cruellest havock around them. We perceive, also, the restorers of health usually attempting its recovery by some or other discharge, by draining the body in some way or other. And if evacuation is the cure of our disorders, we may justly think, that repletion is their most general

general cause. But if this may admit of a dispute, which, I think, it hardly can do; yet is it on all hands agreed—that there are several distempers, to which few are subject but for want of self-denial in themselves, or their ancestors—that most of these distempers are of the painfullest sort, and that some of them are such as we for years lament, without the least hope of recovery, and under an absolute certainty; that the longer they continue upon us the more grievously they will distress us; the acuteness of our sufferings from them will be constantly increasing. *Dean Bolton.*

§ 134. *On Intemperance in Eating.*

SECT. V.

Let me, also, consider intemperance in what we eat, as frequently interrupting the use of our nobler faculties; and sure, at length, greatly to enfeeble them. How long is it before we are really ourselves, after our stomach has received its *full load*! Under it, our senses are dulled, our memory clouded, heaviness and stupidity possess us: some hours must pass, before our vivacity returns, before reason can again act with its full vigour. The man is not seen to advantage, his real abilities are not to be discovered, till the effects of his gluttony are removed, till his constitution has thrown off the weight that oppressed it.

The hours preceding a plentiful meal, or those, which succeed its entire digestion, are, we all find, such, in which we are fittest to transact our affairs, in which all the acts of the understanding are best exerted.

How small a part of his time is therefore, the luxurious man himself! What between the length of his repasts—the space during which he is, as it were, stupified by his excess in them—the many hours of sleep that he wants to refresh, and of exercise to strengthen him; within how small a compass is that portion of his life brought, in which his rational powers are fitly displayed!

In the vigour of youth, in the full strength of manhood, an uncontrolled gratification of appetite allows only short intervals of clear apprehension, of close attention, and the free use of our judgment: but if, either through an uncommonly firm constitution, or by spending all those hours in exercise, which are not passed at our tables or in our beds, we are enabled, notwithstanding such gratification, to reach a more advanced age; what a melancholy

spectacle do we then frequently afford! our memory, our wit, our sense almost wholly destroyed—their remains scarce allowing a conjecture to be formed thence, what they have been—the ruins of the man hardly furnishing a trace of his former ornaments.

Most of those diseases, which luxury brings upon our bodies are, indeed, a gradual impairing of our intellectual faculties: the mind shares the disorder of its companion, acts as that permits, discovers a greater or less capacity, according to the other's more or less perfect state. And as the body, when dead, is totally unfit to be acted upon by the soul; so the nearer it is brought to death by our gluttony, the more we increase its unfitness to display, by how noble a principle it is actuated—what the extent of those abilities is, which the bounty of our infinitely good and powerful Creator has afforded us.

It only remains that I consider, how ruinous the excess I am censuring is to our fortune; and to what a mean dependence, to what vile dishonest practices, it often reduces us.

There are few estates, that can bear the expence, into which what is called an elegant table will draw us. It is not only the price of what is set before us, that we are here to regard, but the waste that the *mistresses* to our luxury occasion—their rapine—the example they set to all, who are concerned in our affairs, and the disqualification, under which we put ourselves to look into them.

He who is determined to please his palate at any price, infects not only those about him with his extravagant turn; but gives them opportunities of defrauding him, which are seldom neglected. His house is the resort of the worst of mankind; for such they always are, whom a well-spread table assembles; and who, by applauding the profuseness that feeds them, by extolling, as proofs of a refined understanding, what are the surest marks of a weak one, or rather of the total want of one, hurry on the ruin, that was, otherwise, with too much speed advancing.

But small is their number, whom it concerns to be told, how a *large fortune* may be reduced: how the making any must be hindered, is the argument, in which the generality are interested. This hindrance is the sure, the undeniable consequence of giving way to our appetite. I have already observed, what hurt our very capacity often receives from it—to what a degree

our intellect is at length impaired by it: I may, further, truly represent it as always indisposing us to that diligence, to that application, without which no science is to be mastered, no art learned, no business well conducted, no valuable accomplishment, of any kind, obtained.

Let us have our support, and seek the increase of our store, from our traffick, or from our labour; it is plain, that he who indulges himself less than we do, as he needs less to maintain him than we do, so he can sell, or can work, cheaper, and must, therefore, make those advantages, which we are not to expect; must by his lesser gains be, at length, enriched, while we, with our larger, shall be in a constant poverty.

A still worse effect of our luxurious turn I reckon those mean and base practices, to which it tempts us. When the plain meal, that our scanty circumstances, after a liberal and expensive education, furnish, cannot content us; and we must either live at another's table, or provide a chargeable entertainment at our own; we descend to the vilest flattery, the most servile complaisance; every generous sentiment is extinguished in us; we soon become fully convinced, that he, who will often eat at another's cost, must be subject to another's humours, must countenance him in his follies—and comply with him in his vices.

Let his favour at length exempt us from so dishonourable an attendance, by furnishing us with the means of having plenty at home: yet what is plenty to the luxurious? His wantonness increases with his income; and, always needy, he is always dependent. Hence no sense of his birth or education, of honour or conscience, is any check upon him; he is the mean drudge, the abandoned tool of his feeder, of whoever will be at the charge of gratifying his palate.

So, if our trade be our maintenance, as no fair gains can answer the expence, which what is called good eating occasions, we are soon led to indirect artifices, to fraudulent dealing, to the most tricking and knavish practices.

In a word, neither our health nor life, neither our credit nor fortune, neither our virtue nor understanding, have any security but from our temperance. The greatest blessings, which are here enjoyed by us, have it for their source.

Hence it is that we have the *fullest* use of our faculties, and the *longest*.

Hence it is, that we fear not to be poor, and are sure to be independent.

Hence disease and pain are removed from us, our decay advances insensibly, and the approaches of death are as gentle as those of sleep.

Hence it is we free ourselves from all temptations to a base or ungenerous action.

Hence it is that our passions are calmed, our lusts subdued, the purity of our hearts preserved, and a virtuous conduct throughout made easy to us.

When it is made so—when by the ease, which we find in the practice of virtue, we become confirmed therein—render it habitual to us; we have then that qualification for happiness in a future state, which, as the best title to it, affords us the best grounds to expect it. *Dean Belton.*

§ 135. On Intemperance in Drinking.

SECT. I.

The arguments against drunkenness, which the common reason of mankind suggests, are these—

The contemptible figure which it gives us:

The hindrance it is to any confidence being reposed in us, so far as our secrecy is concerned:

The dangerous advantage, which it affords the crafty and the knavish over us:

The bad effects, which it hath on our health:

The prejudice, which our minds receive from it:

Its *disposing* us to many crimes, and *preparing* us for the greatest:

The contemptible figure, which drunkenness gives us, is no weak argument for avoiding it.

Every reader has found the *Spartans* mentioned as inculcating sobriety on their children, by exposing to their notice the behaviour of their slaves in a drunken fit. They thought, that were they to apply wholly to the reason of the *youths*, it might be to little purpose: as the force of the arguments, which they used, might not be sufficiently apprehended, or the impression thereof might be soon effaced: but when they made them frequently eye-witnesses of all the madness and absurdities, and at length the perfect senselessness, which the immoderate draught occasioned; the

the idea of the *vile change* would be so fixed in the minds of its beholders, as to render them utterly averse from its cause.

And may we not justly conclude it to be from hence, that the offspring of the persons who are accustomed thus to disguise themselves, often prove remarkably sober? They avoid, in their *riper years*, their parent's crime, in the detestation of it, which they contracted in their *earlier*. As to most other vices, their debasing circumstances are not fully known to us, till we have attained a maturity of age, nor can be then, till they have been duly attended to: but in our very childhood, at our first beholding the effects of drunkenness, we are struck with astonishment, that a reasonable being should be thus changed—should be induced to make himself such an object of contempt and scorn. And, indeed, we must have the man in the *utmost* contempt, whom we hear and see in his progress to excess; at first, teasing you with his contentiousness or impertinence—mistaking your meaning, and hardly knowing his own—then, faltering in his speech—unable to get through an entire sentence—his hand trembling—his eyes swimming—his legs too feeble to support him; till, at length, you only know the human creature by his shape.

I cannot but add, that were one of any sense to have a just notion of all the silly things he says or does, of the wretched appearance, which he makes in a *drunken fit*, he could not want a more powerful argument against repeating his crime.

But as none of us are inclined to think ill of ourselves, we none of us will know, how far our vices expose us; we allow them excuses, which they meet not with from any but ourselves.

This is the case of all; it is particularly so with the drunken; many of whom their shame would undoubtedly reform, could they be brought to conceive, how much they did to be ashamed of.

Nor is it improbable, that it is this very consideration, how much drunkenness contributes to make a man the contempt of his wife—his children—his servants—of all his sober beholders, which has been the cause, that it has never been the reigning vice among a people of any refinement of manners: No, it has only prevailed among the rude and savage, among those of grosser understandings, and less delicacy of sentiment. Crimes, as there are in all men, there must be in all nations; but the more

civilized have perceived drunkenness to be such an offence against common decency, such an abandoning one's self to the ridicule and scoffs of the meanest, that, in whatever else they might transgress, they would not do it in this particular; but leave a vice of such a nature to the wild and uncultivated—to the stupid and undistinguishing part of mankind—to those, who had no notion of propriety of character, and decency of conduct. How late this vice became the reproach of our countrymen, we find in Mr. *Cambden's Annals*. Under the year 1581, he has this observation—“The *English*, who hitherto had, of all the northern nations, shewn themselves the least addicted to immoderate drinking, and been commended for their sobriety, first learned, in these wars in the *Netherlands*, to swallow a large quantity of intoxicating liquor, and to destroy their own health, by drinking that of others.”

Some trace of our ancient regard to sobriety, we may seem still to retain, in our use of the term *set*! which carries with it as great reproach among us, as *Oversight* did among the *Greeks*.

There is a short story, in *Rersby's Memoirs*, very proper to be mentioned under this head.

The Lord Chancellor (*Jessius*) had now like to have died of a fit of the stone; which he virtually brought upon himself, by a furious debauch of wine, at Mr. Alderman *Duncomb's*; where he, the Lord Treasurer, and others, drank themselves into that height of frenzy, that, among friends, it was whispered, they had stripped into their shirts; and that, had not an accident prevented them, they had got upon a sign-post, to drink the King's health; which was the subject of much derision, to say no worse.

Dean Bolton.

§ 136. On Intemperance in Drinking.

SECT. II.

A second objection to drunkenness is that it hinders any confidence being reposed in us, so far as our secrecy is concerned.

Who can trust the man, that is not master of himself? Wine, as it lessens our caution, so it prompts us to speak our thoughts without reserve: when it has sufficiently inflamed us, all the suggestions of prudence pass for the apprehensions of cowardice; we are regardless of consequences; our foresight is gone, and our fear with it.

Here

Here then the artful person properly introducing the subject, urging us to enter upon it—and, after that, praising, or blaming, or contradicting, or questioning us, is soon able to draw from us whatever information he desires to obtain.

Our discretion never outlasts our sobriety. Failings which it most concerns us to conceal, and which, when we are ourselves, we do most industriously conceal, we usually publish, when we have drank to excess. The man is then clearly seen, with all the ill nature and bad qualities, from which his behaviour, in his cooler hours, had induced his most intimate friends to believe him wholly free. We must be lost to reflection, to thought, when we can thus far throw off our disguise. And what is it, but our thought and reflection, that can engage our secrecy in any instance—that can ever be a proper check upon our discourse—that enables us to distinguish what we may speak, and on what we ought to be silent? Do we cease to be in a condition to hide the deformities in ourselves, which we most wish to have concealed? On what point, then, is it likely that we should be reserved? Whose secrets can he keep, who so foully betrays his own?

It may, *thirdly*, be alledged against drunkenness, that it gives the crafty and knavish the most dangerous advantage over us.

This vice puts us into the very circumstances, in which every one would wish us to be, who had a view to impose upon us, to over-reach us, or in any way to gain his ends of us. When the repeated draught has disordered us, it is then, that only by complying with our humour, and joining, to appearance, in our madness, we may be deluded into measures the most prejudicial to us, into such as are our own and our families utter undoing. It is then that our purse is wholly at the mercy of our company; we spend—we give—we lend—we lose. What unhappy marriages have been then concluded! What ruinous conveyances have been then made! How secure soever we may apprehend ourselves from impositions of so very pernicious a nature; yet more or fewer we must have to fear from drunkenness, as the opportunities, which it gives, will constantly be watched by all, who have any design upon us: and if we are known frequently to disorder ourselves, all in our neighbourhood, or among our acquaintance, who are of any seriousness and decency, will be sure to

avoid us, and leave us wholly to those, who find their account in associating with us; who, while they can make us their property, will be, as often as we please, our companions.

A *fourth* argument against drunkenness is its bad effects upon our health. Every act of it is a *fever* for a time: and whence have we more reason to apprehend *one* of a longer continuance, and of the worst consequence? Our blood thus fired, none can be sure, when the disorder raised in it will be quieted, whether its inflammatory state will admit of a remedy: in several thousands it has been found incapable of any; and what has so frequently happened to *others*, may justly be considered as likely to befall *us*. By the same absurd reliance on a good constitution, through which *they* were deceived, *we* may be so likewise.

But supposing the mere fever fit wearing off with the drunken one; how fatal would it prove to be then seized with a distemper of the infectious kind, that was at all malignant! This has often been the case; and when it has been so, the applications of the most skilful have been entirely vain.

Let our intemperance have nothing instantly to dread; for how short a space can it be in such security? The young debauchee soon experiences the issue of his misconduct—soon finds his food disrelished, his stomach weakened, his strength decayed, his body wasted. In the flower of his youth, he often feels all the infirmities of extreme old age; and when not yet in the middle of human life, is got to the end of his own.

If we have attained to manhood, to our full vigour, before we run into the excess, from which I am dissuading; we may, indeed, possibly be many years in breaking a good constitution: but then, if a sudden stroke dipatch us not; if we are not cut off without the least leisure given us to implore the mercy of Heaven; to how much uneasiness are we, generally, reserved—what a variety of painful distempers threaten us! All of them there is very little probability we should escape; and under which soever of them we may labour, we shall experience its cure hopeless, and its severity the saddest lesson, how dear the purchase was of our former mirth.

There are, I grant, instances, where a long-continued intemperance has not prevented the attainment of a very advanced age, free from disorders of every kind. But then it is to be considered how rare

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these instances are; that it is not, perhaps, one in a thousand, who escapes thus; that of those, who do thus escape, the far greater part owe their preservation to hard working, or to an exercise as fatiguing, as any of the more laborious employments. So that if either our frame be not of an unusual firmness, or we do not labour for our bread, and will not for our health; we cannot be of their number, who have so much as a chance, that they will not shorten their lives by their excess. And when we have this chance, we are to remember, how very little we can promise ourselves from it. We are liable to all the diseases, which, in the ordinary course of things, are connected with intemperance; and we are liable to all those, from which even sobriety exempts not; but in this latter case, we have, by no means, the same to hope with the sober, who are easily recovered of what proves mortal to the intemperate.

Dean Bolton.

§ 137. *On Intemperance in Drinking.*

SECT. III.

To consider, *fixtly*, the unhappy effect of drunkenness upon our minds.

Every time we offend in it, we are first madmen, and then idiots: we first say, and do, a thousand the most ridiculous and extravagant things, and then appear quite void of sense. By annexing these constant inconveniences to drinking immoderately, it seems the design of a wise Providence to teach us, what we may fear from a habit of it—to give us a foretaste of the miseries, which it will at length bring upon us, not for a few hours alone, but for the whole remainder of our lives. What numbers have, by hard drinking, fallen into an incurable distraction! And who was ever for many years a sot, without destroying the quickness of his apprehension, and the strength of his memory? What mere drivellers have some of the best capacities become, after a long course of excess!

As we drink to raise our spirits, but, by thus raising, we weaken them; so whatever fresh vigour our parts may seem to derive from our wine, it is a vigour which wastes them; which, by being often thus called out, destroys its source, our natural fancy and understanding. 'Tis like a man's spending upon his principal: he may, for a season, make a figure much superior to his, who supports himself upon the interest of his fortune; but is sure to be undone, when the other is unhurt.

We meet with, as I have already observed, instances, where an extraordinary happiness of constitution has prevented its entire ruin, even from a course of drunkenness of many years continuance: but I much question, whether there are any instances, that such a course has not been remarkably prejudicial to a good capacity. From all the observations, which we can make on the human frame, it may be fairly supposed, that there are no such instances—that it is not reasonable to think we can be, for many years inflaming our brains, without injuring them—be continually disordering the most delicate parts of our machine, without impairing them. A lively imagination, a quick apprehension, a retentive memory, depend upon parts in our structure, which are much more easily hurt, than such, whose sound state is necessary for the preservation of mere life; and therefore we perceive those several faculties often entirely lost, long before the body drops. The man is very frequently seen to survive himself—to continue a living creature, after he has, for some years, ceased to be a rational one. And to this deplorable state nothing is more likely to bring us, than a habit of drunkenness; as there is no vice, that more immediately affects those organs, by the help of which we apprehend, reason, remember, and perform the like acts.

What, *fixtly*, ought to raise in us the utmost abhorrence of drunkenness is, the consideration of the many crimes, to which it disposes us. He, through whose veins the inflaming potion has spread itself, must be under a greater temptation to lewdness, than you can think him in any other circumstances: and from the little reasoning, of which he is then capable, as to the difference of the two crimes, would hesitate no more at adultery than fornication.

Thus, also, for immoderate anger, contention, scurrility and abuse, acts of violence, and the most injurious treatment of others; they are all offences, into which drunkenness is most apt to betray us; so apt to do it, that you will scarcely find a company drinking to excess, without many provoking speeches and actions passing in it—without more or less strife, before it separates. We even perceive the most gentle and peaceable, the most humane and civilized, when they are sober, no sooner intoxicated, than they put off all those commendable qualities, and assume, as it were, a new nature—a nature as different from

Here then the artful person properly introducing the subject, urging us to enter upon it—and, after that, praising, or blaming, or contradicting, or questioning us, is soon able to draw from us whatever information he desires to obtain.

Our discretion never outlasts our sobriety. Failings which it most concerns us to conceal, and which, when we are ourselves, we do most industriously conceal, we usually publish, when we have drunk to excess. The man is then clearly seen, with all the ill nature and bad qualities, from which his behaviour, in his cooler hours, had induced his most intimate friends to believe him wholly free. We must be lost to reflection, to thought, when we can thus far throw off our disguise. And what is it, but our thought and reflection, that can engage our secrecy in any instance—that can ever be a proper check upon our discourse—that enables us to distinguish what we may speak, and on what we ought to be silent? Do we cease to be in a condition to hide the deformities in ourselves, which we most wish to have concealed? On what point, then, is it likely that we should be reserved? Whose secrets can he keep, who so foully betrays his own?

It may, *thirdly*, be alledged against drunkenness, that it gives the crafty and knavish the most dangerous advantage over us.

This vice puts us into the very circumstances, in which every one would wish us to be, who had a view to impose upon us, to over-reach us, or in any way to gain his ends of us. When the repeated draught has disordered us, it is then, that only by complying with our humour, and joining, to appearance, in our madness, we may be deluded into measures the most prejudicial to us, into such as are our own and our families utter undoing. It is then that our purse is wholly at the mercy of our company; we spend—we give—we lend—we lose. What unhappy marriages have been then concluded! What ruinous conveyances have been then made! How secure soever we may apprehend ourselves from impositions of so very pernicious a nature; yet more or fewer we must have to fear from drunkenness, as the opportunities, which it gives, will constantly be watched by all, who have any design upon us: and if we are known frequently to disorder ourselves, all in our neighbourhood, or among our acquaintance, who are of any seriousness and decency, will be sure to

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Dean Bolton.

§ 137. On Intemperance in Drinking.

SECT. III.

To consider, *firstly*, the unhappy effect of drunkenness upon our minds.

Every time we offend in it, we are first madmen, and then idiots: we first say, and do, a thousand the most ridiculous and extravagant things, and then appear quite void of sense. By annexing these constant inconveniences to drinking immoderately, it seems the design of a wise Providence to teach us, what we may fear from a habit of it—to give us a foretaste of the miseries, which it will at length bring upon us, not for a few hours alone, but for the whole remainder of our lives. What numbers have, by hard drinking, fallen into an incurable distraction! And who was ever for many years a sot, without destroying the quickness of his apprehension, and the strength of his memory? What mere drivellers have some of the best capacities become, after a long course of excess!

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We meet with, as I have already observed, instances, where an extraordinary happiness of constitution has prevented its entire ruin, even from a course of drunkenness of many years continuance; but I much question, whether there are any instances, that such a course has not been remarkably prejudicial to a good capacity. From all the observations, which we can make on the human frame, it may be fairly supposed, that there are no such instances—that it is not reasonable to think we can be, for many years inflaming our brains, without injuring them—be continually disordering the most delicate parts of our machine, without impairing them. A lively imagination, a quick apprehension, a retentive memory, depend upon parts in our structure, which are much more easily hurt, than such, whose sound state is necessary for the preservation of mere life; and therefore we perceive those several faculties often entirely lost, long before the body drops. The man is very frequently seen to survive himself—to continue a living creature, after he has, for some years, ceased to be a rational one. And to this deplorable state nothing is more likely to bring us, than a habit of drunkenness; as there is no vice, that more immediately affects those organs, by the help of which we apprehend, reason, remember, and perform the like acts.

What, *secondly*, ought to raise in us the utmost abhorrence of drunkenness is, the consideration of the many crimes, to which it disposes us. He, through whose veins the inflaming potion has spread itself, must be under a greater temptation to lewdness, than you can think him in any other circumstances: and from the little reasoning, of which he is then capable, as to the difference of the two crimes, would hesitate no more at adultery than fornication.

Thus, also, for immoderate anger, contention, scurrility and abuse, acts of violence, and the most injurious treatment of others; they are all offences, into which drunkenness is most apt to betray us; so apt to do it, that you will scarcely find a company drinking to excess, without many provoking speeches and actions passing in it—without more or less strife, before it separates. We even perceive the most gentle and peaceable, the most humane and civilized, when they are sober, no sooner intoxicated, than they put off all those commendable qualities, and assume, as it were, a new nature—a nature as different from

from their former, as the most untractable and fiercest of the brute kind are, from the most accomplished and amiable of our own.

To some vices drunkenness *disposes* us; and,

Lastly, lays us open to more, and certainly to the greatest. It lays us, indeed, open to *most vices*—by the power, which it gives all sorts of *temptations* over us; and by putting us into a *condition*, in which the *rash* and *pernicious suggestions* of others have an especial influence upon us—in which, a profligate companion is enabled to direct us almost as he pleases.

It gives all sorts of *temptations* power over us, by disqualifying us for consideration; and by extinguishing in us all regard to the motives of prudence and caution.

It makes us ready to follow the *rashest* counsels of our companions; because, not allowing us to reason upon them, and incapacitating us for the government of ourselves, it, of course, leaves us to the guidance of those, with whom we are most pleased—of those, who give into our excesses.

It, certainly, lays us open to the *greatest* crimes; because, when we are thoroughly heated by the spirituous draught, we then like what is daring and extravagant—we are then turned to bold and desperate un-

dertakings; and that, which is most licentious, carries then with it the appearance of an attempt, suiting a courageous and undaunted mind. Hence rapes, murders, acts of the utmost inhumanity and barbarity have been *their acts*; who, when sober, would have detested themselves, if such crimes could have entered their *thoughts*.

It may, perhaps, be of use to observe here, what censure has been passed on drunkenness by those, who had only the light of reason for their guide.

It was the saying of one of the wisest Heathen, That a wise man would *drink* wine, but would be sure never to be made *drunk* by it. Another of them condemns wine, as betraying even the prudent into imprudence. The advice of a third is, avoid drinking company; if you accidentally come into it, leave it before you cease to be sober; for, when that happens, the mind is like a *chariot*, whose driver is thrown off: as it is then sure to be hurried away at random, so are *we*, when our reason is gone, sure to be drawn into much guilt. We have one calling drunkenness the *study of madness*; another, a *voluntary madness*. He who was asked, how a person might be brought to a dislike of wine? answered, by beholding the indecencies of the drunken.*

The

* I have, in the former tract, taken notice of the coarse fare, which *Homer* provides for his heroes: it may not be amiss to remark here, from *Athenæus*, what lessons of sobriety he furnishes—what his care is, to dissuade from drinking to excess. This, indeed, may appear deserving to be more particularly insisted upon, since from the praises which he gives wine he was thought not to have been sparing in the use of it.

The host that *Æneas*, heated by liquor, had made of his willingness to fight with *Achilles*, was urged to engage him in a combat, which would have been fatal to him, but that—

The King of Ocean to the fight descends,
Thro' all the whistling darts his course he bends;
Swift interpos'd between the warriors flies,
And casts thick darkness o'er *Achilles'* eyes.

ILIAD, Book XX.

In the Third Book of the *Odyssey*, the discord of the *Greeks*, at a Council called to deliberate about their return, the Poet ascribes to their drunkenness.

Sour with debauch a reeling tribe they came,
With ireful taunts each other they oppose,
Till in loud tumult all the *Greeks* arose,
Now different counsels every breast divide,
Each burns with rancour to the adverse side.

In Book the Ninth of the *Odyssey*, *Polyphemus* is represented as having his sight destroyed, when he was drunk, by a few of those, whose joint force was not, with respect to him, that of a child.

His greedy grasp'd the heavy bowl,
Thrice drained, and pour'd the deluge on his soul.
Then nodding with the fumes of wine
Dropt his huge head, and snoring lay supine.
Then forth the vergetful instrument I bring;

Urg'd

The distoatenance, which drunkenness received among the *Romans*, will be hereafter taken notice of.

Among the *Greeks*, by a law of *Solon*, if a chief magistrate made himself drunk, he was to be put to death. By a law of *Pitarnus*, a double punishment was inflicted upon such who, when drunk, had committed any other crime. They were those, by whose laws he, who drank any greater quantity of wine than was really necessary for his health, suffered death.

Thus much as to their sentiments on drinking to excess, who had only the light of Nature to shew them its guilt.

Dean Bolton.

§ 138. On Intemperance in Drinking.

S E C T. IV.

Let me in the next place, suggest such cautions, as ought to be observed by him, whose desire it is to avoid drunkenness.

Carefully shun the company that is addicted to it.

Do not sit long among those, who are in the progress towards excess.

Urg'd by some present God, they swift let fall
The pointed torment on the visceral ball.

In Book the Tenth, The self-denial of *Eurylochus* preserved him from the vile transformation to which the intemperance of his companions subjected them.

Soon in the luscious feast themselves they lost,
And drank oblivion of their native coast.
Instant her circling wand the Goddess waves,
To hogs transforms them, and the sty receives.

In the same Book the tragical end of *Elpenor* is thus described :

A vulgar soul,
Born but to banquet, and to drain the bowl,
He, hot and careless, on a turret's height
With sleep repair'd the long debauch of night :
The sudden tumult stir'd him where he lay,
And down he hasten'd, but forgot his way ;
Full headlong from the roof the sleeper fell,
And snapp'd the spinal joint, and wak'd in Hell.

The drunkenness of *Eurylochus*, one of the *Cantors*, is fatal to him, and to the whole race. O. B. XXX.

The great *Eurylochus* when this frenzy hung,
Piriboeus' roofs with frantic riot rung :
His nose they shorten'd, and his ears they slit,
And sent him sober'd home, with better wit.
Hence with long war the double race was cur'd,
Fatal to all, but to the aggressor first.

Antinous, who had reproach'd *Ulysses* as made insolent by wine, dies himself with the intoxicating bowl in his hands. O. Book XXII.

High in his hands he rear'd the golden bowl,
Ev'n then to drain it lengthen'd out his breath ;
Chang'd to the deep, the bitter draught of death.
Full thro' his throat *Ulysses*' weapon pass'd,
And pierc'd the neck. He falls, and breathes his last.

the

the persons with whom we much converse; and you can never make yourself more agreeable to any, at least as a companion, than when you countenance their conduct by imitating it. He who associates with the intemperate, and yet refuses to join in their excesses, will soon find, that he is looked upon as condemning their practice; and, therefore, that he has no way of continuing them his friends, but by going into the same irregularity, in which they allow themselves. If his cheerfulness, his facetiousness, or wit, endear him to them, and render them unwilling to quit an intercourse with one so qualified to amuse them; all their arts will be tried to corrupt his sobriety: where he lies most open to temptation will be carefully watched; and no method left unattempted, that can appear likely to make him regardless of his duty. But who can reckon himself safe, when so much pains will be used to ensnare him? Whose virtue is secure, amidst the earnest endeavours of his constant companions to undermine it?

Another caution which I have laid down is, Never sit long among those, who are in the progress towards excess. The expediency of this advice will be acknowledged, if we consider how difficult it is to be long upon our guard—how apt we are to forget ourselves, and then to be betrayed into the guilt, against which we had most firmly resolved.

In the eagerness of our own discourse, or in our attention to that of others, or in the pleasure we receive from the good humour of our companions, or in the share we take of their mirth, we may very naturally be supposed unobserving, how much we have drank—how near we have got to the utmost bounds of sobriety: these, under the circumstances I have mentioned, may easily be passed by us, without the least suspicion of it—before we are under any apprehension of our danger.

As in disputes, one unadvised expression brings on another, and after a few arguments both sides grow warm, from warmth advance to anger, are by anger spurred on to abuse, and thence, often, go to those extremities, to which they would have thought themselves incapable of proceeding: so is it when we sit long, where what gives the most frequent occasion to disputes is before us—where the *intoxicating draught* is circulating; one invites us to more—our spirits rise—our wariness de-

clines—from cheerfulness we pass to noisy mirth—our mirth stops not long short of folly—our folly hurries us to a madness, that we never could have imagined likely to have been our reproach.

If you have often lost the command of yourself, where a certain quantity of liquor hath been exceeded; you should be sure never to approach that quantity—you should confine yourself to what is much short of it. Where we find that a reliance upon our wariness, upon the steadiness and firmness of our *general resolutions*, has deceived us, we should trust *them* no more; we should confide no more in *those precautions*, which have already proved an insufficient check upon us. When I cannot resist a temptation, I have nothing left for my security but to fly it. If I know that I am apt to yield, when I am tempted; the part I have then to act is, to take care that I may not be tempted. Thus only I shew myself in earnest; hereby alone I evidence, that my duty is really my care.

We have experienced, that we cannot withdraw from the company we like, exactly at such a point of time—we have experienced, that we sometimes do not perceive when we have got to the utmost bounds of temperance—we have unhappily experienced, that when it has been known to us, how small an addition of liquor would disorder us, we then have so far lost the power over ourselves, as not to be able to refrain from what we thus fully knew would be prejudicial to us. In these circumstances, no way remains of securing our sobriety, if we will resort to any place where it is at all hazarded, but either having our stint at once before us, or confining ourselves to that certain number of measured draughts, from whence we are sure we can have nothing to fear. And he, who will not take this method—he who will rest in a general intention of sobriety, when he has seen how often that intention has been in vain, how often he has miscarried, notwithstanding it, can never be considered as truly concerned for his past failings, as having seriously resolved not to repeat them. So far as I omit any due precaution against a crime, into which I know myself apt to be drawn, so far I may justly be regarded as indifferent towards it; and so far all my declarations, of being sorry for and determined to leave it, must be considered as insincere.

§ 139. On Intemperance in Drinking.

S E C T. V.

Never make any quantity of strong liquor necessary to your refreshment. What occasions this to be a fit caution is, That if the quantity we cannot be without is, in the beginning, a very moderate one, it will, probably, soon increase, and become, at length, so great as must give us the worst to fear. The reason, why it is thus likely to be increased, is, that a small draught, by the habitual use of it, will cease to raise our spirits; and therefore, when the design of our drinking is in order to raise them, we shall at length seek to do it by a much larger quantity of liquor, than what was wanted for that purpose at first.

It seems to be, further, proper advice on this subject, That we should never apply to strong liquor for ease under cares or troubles of any kind. From fears, from disappointments, and a variety of uneasinesses, none are exempt. The inconsiderate are impatient for a speedy relief; which, as the spirituous draught affords, they are tempted to seek it from thence.

But how very imprudent they must be, who would by such means quiet their minds, is most evident. For, is any real ground of trouble removed, by not attending to it—by diverting our thoughts from it? In many cases, the evil we would remedy by not thinking upon it is, by that very course, made much more distressing, than it otherwise would have been; nay, sometimes, quite remediless. In all cases, the less heated our brain is, and the greater calmness we preserve, the sifter we are to help ourselves; the sifter we are to encounter difficulties, to prevent our being involved in them; or, if that cannot be, to extricate ourselves speedily from them.

The ease, which liquor gives, is but that of a dream: when we awake, we are again ourselves; we are in the same situation as before, or, perhaps, in a worse. What then is to be the next step? Soon as the stupefying effects of one draught are gone off, another must be taken; the sure consequence of which is, that such a habit of drinking will be contracted, as we shall vainly endeavour to conquer, though the original inducement to it should no longer subsist. To guard against this, as it is of the utmost importance to all of us, so the only certain way is, by stopping in the very first instance; by never seeking, either under care or pain, relief from what we

drink, but from those helps, which reason and religion furnish; the only ones, indeed, to which we can wisely resort in any straits; and which are often found capable of extricating us, when our condition seems the most desperate.

A prudent man should never desert himself. Where his own efforts avail him not, the care of an over-ruling Providence may interpose, and deliver him. But to borrow support against our troubles from liquor, is an entire desertion of ourselves; it is giving up our state, as an undone one—it is abandoning our own discretion, and relinquishing all hopes of the DEITY's assistance.

Lastly, Know always, how you may usefully employ, or innocently amuse yourself. When time is a burden upon us, when we are at a loss how to pass it, our cheerfulness of course abates, our spirits flag, we are restless and uneasy: here then we are in the fittest disposition, and under the strongest inducements, to resort to what we know will enliven us, and make our hours glide away insensibly. Besides, when we cannot tell what to do with ourselves, it is natural we should seek for those, who are as idle as ourselves; and when such company meet, it is easy to see what will keep them together; that drinking must be their entertainment, since they are so ill qualified for any other.

Idleness has been not unjustly term'd, the parent of all vices; but none it more frequently produces than drunkenness; as no vice can make a greater waste of our time, the chief thing about which the idle are solicitous. On the other hand, he who can profitably busy, or innocently divert himself, has a sure resort in all humours—he has his spirits seldom depressed, or when they are so, he can, without any hazard, recruit them—he is so far from seeking a correspondence with such, as are always in a readiness to engage in schemes of intemperance and riot, that he shuns them; his amusements, quite different from theirs, occasion him to be seldom with them, and secure him from being corrupted by them.

This we may lay down as a most certain truth, that our virtue is never safe, but when we have proper diversions. Unbent we sometimes must be; and when we know not how to be so in an innocent way, we soon shall be in a guilty. But if we can find full entertainment in what is free from all reproach, in what neither has any thing criminal in it, nor can lead us into what is criminal; then, indeed, and only then, can we

we be thought in little danger, and not likely to yield to the bad examples surrounding us.

§ 140. *On Intemperance in Drinking.*

SECT. VI.

But let me consider what the intemperate say in their excuse.

That any should frequently put themselves into a condition, in which they are incapable of taking the least care of themselves—in which they are quite stupid and helpless—in which, whatever danger threatens them, they can contribute nothing towards its removal—in which they may be drawn into the most shocking crimes—in which all they hold dear is at the mercy of their companions: the excess, I say, which causes us to be in such a situation, none seem disposed to defend: but what leads to it, you find numbers thus vindicating, or excusing.

They must converse—They must have their hours of cheerfulness and mirth—When they are disordered, it happens before they are aware of it—A small quantity of liquor has this unhappy effect upon them—If they will keep up their interest, it must be by complying with the intemperate humour of their neighbours—Their way of life, their business, obliges them to drink with such numbers, that it is scarcely possible they should not be sometimes guilty of excess.

To all which it may be said, that, bad as the world is, we may every where, if we seek after them, find those, whose company will rather confirm us in our sobriety, than endanger it. Whatever our rank, station, profession or employment may be, suitable companions for us there are; with whom we may be perfectly safe, and free from every temptation to excess. If these are not in all respects to our minds, we must bear with them, as we do with our condition in this world; which every prudent person makes the best of; since, let what will be the change in it, still it will be liable to some objection, and never entirely as he would wish it. In both cases we are to consider, not how we shall rid ourselves of all inconveniences, but where are likely to be the fewest: and we should judge that set of acquaintance, as well as that part of life, the most eligible, in which we have the least to fear, from which our ease and innocence are likely to meet with the fewest interruptions.

But mirth, you say, must sometimes be consulted. Let it be so. I would no more dissuade you from it than I would from seriousness. Each should have its season, and its measure: and as it would be thought by all very proper advice, with respect to seriousness, "Let it not proceed to melancholy, to moroseness, or to censoriousness;" it is equally fit advice, with regard to mirth, "Let wisdom accompany it: Let it not transport you to riot or intemperance: Do not think you can be called merry, when you are ceasing to be reasonable."

Good humour, cheerfulness, facetiousness, which are the proper ingredients of mirth, do not want to be called out by the repeated draught: it will rather damp them, from the apprehension of the disorder it may soon produce. Whenever we depart from, or endanger, our innocence, we are laying a foundation for uneasiness and grief; nor can we, in such circumstances, be merry, if we are not void of all thought and reflection: and this is, undoubtedly, the most melancholy situation, in which we can be conceived, except when we are undergoing the punishment of our folly. The joy, the elevation of spirits proper to be sought after by us, is that alone, which can never be a subject of remorse, or which never will embitter more of our hours than it relieves. And when this may be obtained in such a variety of ways, we must be lost to all common prudence, if we will apply to none of them; if we can only find mirth in a departure from sobriety.

You are, it seems, overtaken, before you are aware of it. This may be an allowable excuse for three or four times, in a man's life; oftener, I think, it cannot be. What you are sensible may easily happen, and must be extremely prejudicial to you, when it does happen, you should be always aware of. No one's virtue is any farther his praise, than from the care he takes to preserve it. If he is at no trouble and pains on that account, his innocence has nothing in it, than can entitle him to a reward. If you are truly concerned for a fault, you will necessarily keep out of the way of repeating it; and the more frequent your repetitions of it have been, so much the greater caution you will use for the future.

Many are heard accusing their drunkenness, by the small quantity which occasions it. A more trifling excuse for it could not be made. For if you know how small a quantity of liquor will have that unhappy effect, you should forbear that quantity. It is as much

much your duty to do so, as it is his duty to forbear a greater quantity, who suffers the same from it, which you do from a lesser. When you know that it is a crime to be drunk, and know likewise what will make you so; the more or less, which will do this, is nothing to the purpose—alters not your guilt. If you will not refrain from two or three draughts, when you are sure that drunkenness will be the consequence of them; it cannot be thought, that any more regard to sobriety keeps you from drinking the largest quantity whatsoever. Had such a regard an influence upon you, it would have an equal one; it would keep you from every step, by which your sobriety could suffer.

As to supporting an interest, promoting a trade, advantageously bargaining for ourselves, by drinking more than is convenient for us; they are, for the most part, only the poor evasions of the insincere, of those who are willing to lay the blame of their misconduct on any thing, rather than on what alone deserves it—rather than on their bad inclinations.

Civility and courtesy, kind offices, acts of charity and liberality will both raise us more friends, and keep those we have firmer to us, than any quantities of liquor, which we can either distribute or drink: and as for mens trade or their bargains, let them always act fairly—let them, whether they buy or sell, shew that they abhor all tricking and imposition—all little and mean artifices: and I'll stake my life, they shall never have reason to object, that, if they will *always* preserve their *sobriety*, they must lessen their *gains*.

But were it true, that, if we will resolve never to hazard intoxicating ourselves, we must lose our friends, and forego our present advantage; they are inconveniences, which, in such a case, we should cheerfully submit to. Some pains must be taken; some difficulties must be here encountered; if we will have any reasonable ground to expect happiness in a future state. Of this even common sense must satisfy us.

Credulous as we are, I think it impossible, that any man in his wits would believe me, if I were to tell him, that he might miss no opportunity of bettering his fortune—that he might remove any evil he had to fear, by whatsoever method he thought proper—that he might throughout follow his inclinations, and gratify his appetites; and yet rest assured, that his death would be but the passage to great and end-

less joys. I know not, to whom such an assertion would not appear extremely absurd: notwithstanding which, we certainly, do not act, as if there were any absurdity in it, when we make what is evidently our duty give way to our convenience; and rather consider, how profitable this or that practice is than how right. That, therefore, sobriety, added to other parts of a virtuous conduct, may entitle us to the so much hoped for reward, we must be sober, under all sorts of discouragements. It rarely, indeed, happens, that we meet with any; but to resist the *greatest* must be our resolution, if we will recommend ourselves to the Governor of the universe—if we will hope for his favour. Dean Bolton.

§ 141. On Intemperance in Drinking.

S E C T. VII.

Thus much with regard to drunkenness, so far as it is committed by intoxicating ourselves—by drinking, 'till our reason is gone: but as there is yet another way, in which we may offend in it, *viz.* by drinking more than is proper for our refreshment; I must on this likewise bestow a few observations.

When we drink more than suffices to recruit our spirits, our passions are heightened, and we cease to be under the influence of that calm temper, which is our only safe counsellor. The next advance beyond refreshment is to that mirth, which both draws many unguarded speeches from us, and carries us to many indiscreet actions—which wastes our time, not barely while we are in the act of drinking, but as it unsettles our heads, and indisposes us to attention to business,—to a close application in any way. Soon as our spirits are raised beyond their just pitch, we are for schemes of diversion and pleasure; we are unfit for serious affairs, and therefore cannot entertain a thought of being employed in them.

Besides, as according to the rise of our spirits, their fall will, afterward, be; it is most probable, that when we find them thus sunk, we shall again resort to what we have experienced the remedy of such a complaint; and thereby be betrayed, if not into the excesses, which deprive us of our reason, yet into such a habit of drinking, as occasions the loss of many precious hours—impairs our health—is a great misapplication of our fortune, and a most ruinous

example to our observers. But, indeed, whence is it to be feared, that we shall become downright sots—that we shall contract a habit of drinking to the most disguising excess; whence, I say, is this to be feared, if not from accustoming ourselves to the frequent draughts, which neither our thirst—nor fatigue—nor constitution requires: by frequently using them, our inclination to them is strengthened; till at length we cannot prevail upon ourselves to leave our cup, while we are in a condition to lift it.

These are objections, in which all are concerned, whose refreshment from what they drink, is not their rule in it; but to men of moderate fortunes, or who are to make their fortunes, other arguments are to be used: these persons are to consider, that even the lesser degree of intemperance, now censured, is generally their utter undoing, thro' that neglect of their affairs, which is its necessary consequence. When we mind not our own business, who can we think likely to mind it for us? Very few, certainly, will be met with, *disposed* and *able* to do it; and not to be both, is much the same, as to be neither. While we are passing our time with our cheerful companions, we are not only losing the advantages, which care and industry, either in inspecting our affairs, or pursuing our employment, would have afforded us; but we are actually consuming our fortune—we are habituating ourselves to a most expensive idleness—we are contracting a disinclination to *fatigue* and *confinement*, even when we most become sensible of their necessity, when our affairs must run into the utmost confusion without them. And we, in fact, perceive that, as soon as the scholar, or trader, or artificer, or whoever it is, that has the whole of his maintenance to gain, or has not much to spend, addict himself only to this lower degree of intemperance—accustoms himself to sit long at his wine, and to exceed that quantity of it which his relief demands, he becomes worthless in a double sense, as deserving nothing, and, if a care greater than his own save him not, as having nothing.

Add to all this, that the very same diseases, which may be apprehended from often intoxicating ourselves, are the usual attendants not only of *frequently drinking* to the full of what we can conveniently bear, but even of doing it in a large quantity. The only difference is, that such diseases come more speedily on us from the former, than the latter cause; and, perhaps, destroy us

sooner. But how desirable it is to be long struggling with any of the distempers, which our excesses occasion, they can best determine who labour under them.

The inconveniencies which attend our more freely using the least hurtful of any spirituous liquors have so evidently appeared—have shewn themselves so many and so great, as even to call for a remedy from the law itself; which, therefore, punishes both those, who loiter away their time at their cups, and those, who suffer it to be done in their houses.

A great part of the world, a much greater than all the parts added together, in which the Christian religion is professed, are forbidden all manner of *liquors*, which can cause *drunkenness*; they are not allowed *the smallest quantity of them*; and it would be an offence which would receive the most rigorous chastisement, if they were *known* to use any; their lawgiver has, in this particular, been thought to have acted according to the rules of good policy; and the governors of those countries, in which this law is in force, have, from its first reception amongst them, found it of such benefit, as to allow no relaxation of it. I do not mention such a practice as any rule for us: difference of climates makes quite different ways of living necessary: I only mention it as a lesson to us, that, if so great a part of mankind submit to a total abstinence from *wine* and *strong drink*, we should use them sparingly, with caution and moderation; which is, certainly, necessary to our welfare, whatever may be the effect of entirely forbearing them on theirs.

In the most admired of all the western governments, a strict sobriety was required of their women, under the very severest penalties: the punishment of a departure from it was nothing less than capital: and the custom of saluting women, we are told, was introduced in order to discover whether any spirituous liquor had been drank by them.

In this commonwealth the men were prohibited to drink wine 'till they had attained thirty years.

The whole body of soldiery, among this people, had no other draught to enable them to bear the greatest fatigue—to raise their courage, and animate them to encounter the most terrifying difficulties and dangers, but water sharpened with vinegar. And what was the consequence of such strict sobriety observed by both sexes? What was the consequence of being born of parents so exactly temperate, and of being trained up in a habit of the utmost abstemiousness—

What,

What, I say, followed upon this, but the attainment of such a firmness of body and mind—of such an indifference to all the emasculating pleasures—of such vigour and fearlessness, that the people, thus born and educated, soon made all opposition fall before them, experienced no enemy a match for them—were conquerors, wherever they carried their arms.

By these remarks on the temperance of the antient Romans, I am not for recalling customs so quite the reverse of those, in which we were brought up; but some change in our manners I could heartily wish they might effect: and if not induce us to the same sobriety, which was practised by these heathens, yet to a much greater than is practised by the generality of Christians.

Dean Bolton.

§ 142. On Pleasure.

S E C T. I.

To the Honourable ———

While you are constantly engaged in the pursuit of knowledge, or in making what you have acquired of use to your fellow-creatures—while information is your amusement, and to become wiser is as much your aim, in all the company you keep, as in all the books you read; may I not justly think it matter of astonishment to you, that such numbers of your species should be quite unmindful of all rational improvement—solely intent on schemes of mirth and diversion—passing their lives in a round of sporting and trifling.

If every age has its madness, and one is distinguished by its warlike humour, a second by its enthusiasm, a third by its party and political rage; the distraction of the present may truly be pronounced, its turn to pleasure, so sadly possessing those of each sex and of all ages—those of every profession and employment—the several ranks and orders of men; that they, who are strangers to the sudden changes in human dispositions, are apt to think, that all seriousness and application—all the valuable attainments, which are the reward only of pains, must, inevitably, be soon lost among us.

I am not out of hopes, that what thus threatens, in the opinion of some, our speedy ruin, and has its very great mischief denied by none, who give it the least attention, will one day receive as remarkable an opposition from your pen, as it now does a discouragement from your example.

Let, in the mean time, a sincere well-wisher to his countrymen interpose his mean endeavours to serve them—offer to their consideration some, perhaps not wholly contemptible, arguments against the pursuit, to which they are so blameably attached—shew them pleasure in that true light in which they are unwilling to see it—teach them, not that it should be always declined, but that they should never be enslaved to it—represent the dangers, to which it exposes them, yet point out how far it may be enjoyed with innocence and safety.

Every man seems to be so far free, as he can dispose of himself—as he can maintain a due subordination in the parts of his frame, use the deliberation proper to acquaint him with what is most for his advantage, and, according to the result thereof, proceed to action. I consider each hindrance to the knowledge of our true happiness, or to its pursuit, as, according to its degree, an abridgment of our liberty; and, I think that he may be truly stiled a slave to pleasure, who follows it, wheresoever directed to it by appetite, passion, or fancy. When we listen to their suggestions in the choice of good, we allow them an authority, that our Creator never intended they should have; and when their directions in that choice are actually complied with, a lawless sway ensues—the use of our nobler faculties becomes obstructed—our ability to deliberate, as we ought, on our conduct, gradually fails, and to alter it, at length wholly ceases.

Our sensual and rational parts are almost in continual opposition: we add to the power of the former, by a thoughtless, idle, voluptuous life; and to that of the latter by reflection, industry, continence.

As you cannot give way to appetite, but you increase its restlessness, you multiply its demands, and become less able to resist them; so the very same holds true of every principle that opposes reason; if capable to influence you in one instance, it will more easily do it in a second, gaining ground, 'till its dominion over you becomes absolute.

When the question concerns our angry passions, all are ready to acknowledge the danger of not restraining them, the terrible subjection to which such remissness exposes us. These falling more under the general notice, from the apparency of the disorder, and extent of the mischief which they occasion, a better judgment is ordinarily made of them, than of affections less tumultuous, less dangerous to our affec-

ates: but there can be no reason imaginable why anger, if less carefully watched and resisted, should exercise, at length, the most unhappy tyranny over us, which will not hold as to any passion or lust whatsoever. And as with respect to violent resentment, we are ready to gratify it, whatever it costs us: so let what will be the passion or lust that governs us, no prudential considerations are a counterpoise for it.

With regard to pleasure, the fallacy of our reasoning upon it lies here; we always look upon the enjoyment of it as a single act, as a compliance with our liking in this or that instance: the repetition of that indulgence is not seen under a dependence on any former, or under the least connexion with any future. That such a pursuit should engage us seems to be wholly from our choice; and this choice is thought to be as free, at the second time of our making it as at the first, and at the twentieth, as at the second. Intinuation is never beheld as possible to become constraint—is, I mean, never regarded as capable of being indulged, 'till it cannot be resisted. No man ever took the road of pleasure, but he apprehended that he could easily leave it: had he considered his whole life likely to be passed in its windings, the preference of the ways of virtue would have been indispensible.

But as sensual pursuits could not engage so many, if something very delightful were not expected in them; it will be proper to shew, how unlikely they are to answer such an expectation—what there is to discourage us from attaching ourselves to them.

Consider sensual pleasure under the highest possible advantages, it will yet be found liable to these objections.

First, That its enjoyment is fleeting, expires soon, extends not beyond a few moments; Our spirits sink instantly under it, if in a higher degree: nor are they long without being depressed, when it less powerfully affects them. A review here affords me no comfort: I have here nothing delightful to expect from Reflection. The gratifications, in which I have allowed myself, have made me neither wiser nor better. The fruit was relished while upon my tongue, but when passed thence I scarcely retain the idea of its flavour.

How transitory our pleasures are, we cannot but acknowledge, when we consider, how many we, in different parts of our lives, eagerly pursue, and then wholly decline.

That, which is the high *entertainment* of our infancy, doth not afford us the least, when this state is passed; what then delights us much in our youth, is quite tasteless to us, as we approach manhood; and our engagements at this period give way to some others, as we advance in age.

Nor do our pleasures thus pass only with our years, but, really, those which best suit our time of life, and on the pursuit of which we are most intent, must be interrupted in order to be enjoyed.

We can no more long bear pleasure, than we can long endure fatigue; or, rather, what we call pleasure, after some continuance, becomes fatigue.

We want relief in our diversions, as well as in our most serious employments.

When *Socrates* had observed, "of how unaccountable a nature that thing is, which men call Pleasure, since, though it may appear to be contrary to Pain, as never being with it in the same person, yet they so closely follow each other, that they may seem linked, as it were, together." He then adds—"If *Æsop* had attended to this, he would, I think, have given us a fable, in which the Divinity, willing to reconcile these two enemies, but yet unable to do it, had, nevertheless, so connected them in their extremities, that where the one comes, the other shall be sure to succeed it."

From the excess of joy, how usual is the transition to that of dejection! Laughter, as well as grief, calls for tears to ease us under it; and it may be even more dangerous to my life to be immoderately delighted, than to be severely afflicted.

Our pleasures then soon pass; and, secondly, their repetition certainly cloy.

As the easiness of posture and agreeableness of place wear off by a very short continuance in either; it is the same with any sensual gratifications which we can pursue, and with every enjoyment of that kind, to which we can apply. What so delights our palate, that we should relish it, if it were our constant food? What juice has nature furnished, that, after being a frequent, continues to be a pleasing, draught? Sounds, how artfully soever blended or successive, tire at length the ear; and odours, at first the most grateful, soon either cease to recreate us, or become offensive to us. The finest prospect gives no entertainment to the eye that has been long accustomed to it. The pile, that strikes with admiration each casual beholder, affords its royal inhabitant

inhabitant no comfort, but what the peasant has in his cottage.

That love of variety and change, to which none of our kind are strangers, might be a lesson to us, where our expectations are ill grounded, where they must necessarily be disappointed; for if no man ever yet lived, who could say of any of the pleasures of sense—On this I repose myself—it quite answers my hopes from it—my wishes rove not beyond it: if none could ever affirm this, it is most evident, that we in vain search after permanent delight from any of the objects, with which we are now conversant—that the only difference between the satisfactions we pursue, and those we quit, is, that we are already tired of the one, and shall soon be of the other.

Hear the language of him, who had tried the extent of every sensual pleasure, and must have found the uncloying, had any such existed: “I said in my heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth. I gave myself to wine, I made me great works, I builded me houses, I planted me vineyards, I made me gardens, I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruit. I made me pools of water, I amassed gold and silver, I had possessions, above all that were in Jerusalem before me. I tried what love, what music, what all the delights of the sons of men could effect: whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy. Then I looked on all my works, on all my pursuits, and behold! all was vanity and vexation of spirit.”

Tully mentions *Xerxes* as having proposed a reward to the man, who could make known to him some new pleasure. The monarch of the East, it seems, met with nothing within the bounds of his mighty empire that could fix his inclinations. The most voluptuous people on earth had discovered no delight, that their sovereign could acknowledge otherwise than superficial. Happy! had it been a lesson to their prince, or could it be one to us, where our good should be sought—what pursuits were likely to bring us blessings certain to improve, as well as endure.

§ 143. On Pleasure.

SECT. II.

A third disadvantage ensuing to us from our attachment to the delights, which appetite and fancy purvey, is, that it indisposes us for useful inquiries, for every

endeavour worthy of our nature, and suiting the relations in which we are placed.

The disappointment, which the *Persian* Emperor met with in all his schemes of the voluptuous kind, did not put him on applying to those of a different one. Experience shewed him his folly, but could not teach him wisdom—It could not, when it had convinced him of the vanity of his pursuits, induce him to relinquish them.

We find a *Solomon*, indeed, discovering his error, acknowledging that he had erred, and bearing testimony to religion and virtue as alone productive of true happiness; but where are we to look for another among the votaries to sensuality, thus affected, thus changed?

As some have observed of courts, that such, who live in them, are always uneasy there, yet always unwilling to retreat; the very same holds true of the licentious practice, which they too generally countenance: fully convinced of its vanity and folly, we continue to our last moments attached to it—averse from altering the conduct, which we cannot but disapprove. Our faculties are, indeed, so constituted, that our capacity for many enjoyments extends not beyond such a period in our being: if we will not quit them, they will us—will depart, whatever our eagerness may be for their continuance. But let us not deceive ourselves: when they are gone as to their sense, they are not as to their power. He who says to his youth, eat, drink, and be merry—who thinks of nothing else at that season, will hanker after delicacies, when he has neither teeth to chew, nor palate to distinguish them; will want the cup, which he cannot lift; and seek for mirth, when he will thereby become the object of it. The habit operates, when none of the inducements for our contracting it remain; and when the days of pleasure are past, those of wisdom and virtue are not the nearer. Our dispositions do not decay with our strength. The prudence, which should attend grey hairs, doth not necessarily come to us with them. The young rake is a lascivious obscene wretch, when he owes his warmth to his flannel; delights in the filthy tale, when his hearers are almost poisoned by the breath, with which he utters it; and when least able to offend in act, he does it in desire.

That the humour for fighting or racing, or whatever inclination governed us in this world, accompanies us to the other, is not an entire fiction of the poet, but, assuredly,

has thus much truth in it, that whatever humour we indulge, it accompanies us to the close of life. There is a time, when our manners are pliant, when the counsels of the sober operate upon us as successfully, as the insinuations of the corrupt; but when that time is passed, our customs are, daily, working themselves into our *constitution*, and want not many years to become scarce distinguishable from it. God, I am persuaded, has formed us all with such apprehensions of what is right, as, if a proper care were taken to preserve and improve them, would have the happiest influence upon our practice; but when the season for extending this care to them has been neglected, they are in most of us greatly impaired, and in some appear almost wholly lost.

Let the *understanding* remain uninformed, 'till half the age of man is past, and what *improvement* is the best then likely to make? how irksome would it seem to be put upon any? It is with our will the very same; turned for half or three parts of our life to sloth and wantonness, to riot and excess, any correction of it, any alteration to the pursuits becoming us, may seem quite hopeless. While we are devoting ourselves to pleasure, we are weakening every principle whereby virtue can engage us, we are extinguishing within us all sense of true desert—subduing conscience—divesting ourselves of shame—corrupting our natural notions of good and evil; and so indisposing ourselves for consideration, that our constant endeavour will be to decline it. Thus when our *follies* are a *burden* to us, their correction seems a greater; and we try what ease may be found by varying, rather than seek any from quitting, them.

Fourthly, The larger our share is of outward enjoyments, and the dearer they are to us; so much the more afflicting our concern will be to *leave* this *scene* of them—so much the greater terror and torment shall we receive from the apprehension, how soon we may be obliged to do it.

Let the man of pleasure colour it the most agreeably, place it in the fairest point of view, this objection will remain in its full strength against him: "You are not master of the continuance of the good, of which you boast; and can you avoid thinking of its removal, or bear the thoughts thereof, with any calmness and composure?" But what kind of happiness is that, which we are in hourly fears of losing, and which, when lost, is gone for ever?

If I am here only for a few days, the part I ought to act is, certainly, that of a traveller on his journey, making use, indeed, of such conveniencies, as the road affords him, but still regarding himself as upon his road—never so incumbering himself that he shall be unwilling to advance, when he knows he must do it—never so diverting himself at any resting place, that it shall be painful to him to depart thence.

When we are accustomed to derive all our comforts from *sense*, we come to want the very idea of any other: this momentary part of our existence is the full extent we give to our joys; and we have the mortifying reflection continually before us, that their conclusion is nearer every hour we are here, and may possibly take place the very next. Thus each accession of delight will really be but a new source of affliction, become an additional motive for complaint of the short space allowed for its enjoyment.

The mind of man is so disposed to look forward, so fitted to extend its views, that, as much as it is contracted by sensuality, it cannot be fixed thereby to the instant moment: We can never, like the beasts, be so far engrossed by the satisfaction before us, but the thoughts will occur, how often may we hope to repeat it—how many distant hours it is likely to relieve—how much of our duration can it advantage? and the scanty continuance which our most sanguine hopes can assign it, must, therefore, be in some degree its abatement—must be an ingredient in our draught sure to embitter the many pleasing ones which compound it. And what a wise part are we then acting, when we are taking the brutes portion for ours, and cannot have all the benefits even of that! cannot remove the inconveniences of reason, when we forego its comforts!

These are some of the many disadvantages inseparable from pleasure, and from the expectation of which none of its votaries are exempt. We cannot attach ourselves to any of the delights, which appetite or fancy provides, but we shall be sure to find them quickly passing—when repeated, cloying—indisposing us for worthy pursuits—rendering us averse from quitting the world, and uneasy as often as it occurs to our thoughts, how soon our summons may be to depart.

§ 144. On Pleasure.

S E C T. III.

But what, you'll say, must all then commence philosophers? Must every gay amusement be banished the world? Must those of each sex and of all ages have their looks ever in form, and their manners under the regulation of the severest wisdom? Has nature given us propensities only to be resisted? Have we ears to distinguish harmony, and are we never to delight them with it? Is the food which our palate best relishes, to be therefore denied it? Can odours recreate our brain, beauty please our eye, and the design of their structure be, that we should exclude all agreeable sensation from either? Are not natural inclinations nature's commands? are they not its declarations whence we may obtain our good, and its injunctions to seek it thence? Is any thing more evident, than that serious applications cannot long be sustained—that we must sink under their weight—that they soon stupify or distract us? The exercise of our intellectual part is the fatigue of our corporeal, and cannot be carried on, but by allowing us intervals of relaxation and mirth. Deny us pleasure, and you unfit us for business; and destroy the man, while you thus seek to perfect him.

A full answer might, I should think, be given to whatever is here alledged, by enlarging on the following observations.

1. Pleasure is only so far censured, as it costs us more than it is worth—as it brings on a degree of uneasiness, for which it doth not compensate.

2. It is granted, that we are licensed to take all that pleasure, which there is no reason for our declining. So much *true pleasure*, or so much pleasure, as is not counterbalanced by any inconveniencies attending it, is so much happiness accruing to him who takes it, and a part of that general good, which our Creator designed us.

3. As the inclinations, with which mankind were originally formed, were, certainly, very different from those, which guilt has since propagated; *many restraints* must, therefore, be necessary, which would not have been so, had our primitive rectitude been preserved.

4. Bad education, bad example, increase greatly our natural depravity, before we come to reason at all upon it; and give the appearance of good to many things, which would be seen in a quite different

light, under a different education and intercourse.

These particulars let it suffice barely to mention; since, it is here admitted, that when there is no reason for our declining any pleasure, there is one for our taking it, I am more especially concerned to shew, when there is a reason, why pleasure should be declined—what those limits are, which ought to be prescribed to our pleasures, and which when any, in themselves the most innocent, pass, they necessarily become immoral and culpable. A minute discussion of this point is not here proposed: such observations only will be made upon it, as appear to be of more general use, and of greatest importance.

What I would, first, consider as rendering any pleasure blameable is,

When it raises our Passions.

As our greatest danger is from them, their regulation claims our constant attention and care. *Human laws* consider them in their effects, but the *divine law* in their aim and intention. To render me obnoxious to men, it is necessary that my impure lust be gratified, or an attempt be made to gratify it; that my anger operate by violence, my covetousness by knavery: but my duty is violated, when my heart is impure, when my rage extends not beyond my looks and my wishes, when I invade my neighbour's property but in desire. The man is guilty the moment his affections become so, the instant that any dishonest thought finds him approving and indulging it.

The enquiry, therefore, what is a fit amusement, should always be preceded by the consideration of what is our disposition. For, it is not greater madness to suppose, that equal quantities of food or liquor may be taken by all with equal temperance, than to assert, that the same pleasure may be used by all with the same innocence. As, in the former case, what barely satisfies the stomach of one, would be a load insupportable to that of another; and the draught, that intoxicates me, may scarcely refresh my companion: so in the latter, an amusement perfectly warrantable to this sort of constitution, will to a different become the most criminal. What liberties are allowable to the calm, that must not be thought of by the choleric! How securely may the cold and phlegmatic roam, where he, who has greater warmth and sensibility, should not approach! What safety attends the contemner of gain, where the most fatal

snare await the avaritious! Some less *governable passion* is to be found in them, whose resolution is steadiest, and virtue firmest: upon *that* a constant guard must be kept; by any relaxation, any indulgence, it may be able to gain that strength, which we shall afterwards fruitlessly oppose. When all is quiet and composed within us, the discharge of our duty puts us to little trouble; the performance thereof is not the heavy task; that so many are willing to represent it: but to restore order and peace is a work very different from preserving them, and is often with the utmost difficulty effected. It is with the natural body, as with the politic; rebellion in the members is much easier prevented than quelled; confusion once entered, none can foresee to what lengths it may proceed, or of how wide a ruin it may be productive.

What, likewise, renders any pleasure culpable, is its making a large, or an unreasonable, demand upon our time.

No one is to live to himself, and much less to confine his care to but one, and that the worst part of himself. Man's proper employment is to cultivate right dispositions in his own breast, and to benefit his species—to perfect himself, and to be of as much use in the world, as his faculties and opportunities will permit. The satisfactions of sense are never to be pursued for their own sake: their enjoyment is none of our end, is not the purpose, for which God created us; amuse, refresh us it may, but when it busies, when it chiefly engages us, we act directly contrary to the design, for which we were formed; making that our *care*, which was only intended to be our *relief*.

Some, destitute of the necessities, others, of the conveniencies of life, are called to labour, to commerce, to literary application, in order to obtain them; and any remissness of these persons, in their respective employments or professions, any pursuit inconsistent with a due regard to their maintenance, meets ever with the harshest censure, is universally branded, as a failure in common prudence and discretion: but what is this animal life, in comparison with that to which we are raised by following the dictates of reason and conscience? How despicable may the man continue, when all the affluence to which his wishes aspire, is obtained?

Can it then be so indiscreet a part, to follow *pleasure*, when we should mind our *fortune*? do all so clearly see the blame of

this? And may we doubt how guilty that attachment to it is, which lays waste our understanding—which entails on us ignorance and error—which renders us even more useless than the beings whom instinct alone directs? All capacity for improvement is evidently a call to it. The neglect of our powers is their abuse; and the slight of *them* is that of their giver. Whatever talents we have received, we are to account for; and it is not from revelation alone that we learn this: no moral truth commands more strongly our assent, than that the qualifications bestowed upon us, are afforded us, in order to our cultivating them—to our obtaining from them the advantages they can yield us; and that foregoing such advantages, we become obnoxious to him, who designed us them, as we misapply his gift, and knowingly oppose his will. For, the surest token we can have, that any perfections ought to be pursued, is, that they may be attained: our ability to acquire them is the voice of God within us to endeavour after them. And would we but ask ourselves the question, Did the Creator raise us above the herd, and doth he allow us to have no aims nobler than those of the herd—to make its engagements the whole of ours? we could not possibly mistake in the answer. All, who have reason given them, know that they may and ought to improve it, ought to cultivate it at some seasons, and ever to conform to it.

Greater privileges call us but to more important cares. You are not placed above your fellow-creatures, you have not the leisure, which they want, that you may be more idle and worthless, may devote more of your time to vanity and folly, but that you may become more eminent in the perfections you acquire, and the good you do. He, who has all his hours at command, is to consider himself as favoured with those opportunities to increase in wisdom and virtue, which are vouchsafed to few; if no good effect follows; if having them, he only misapplies them; his guilt is according to what his advantage might have been.

The dispensations of heaven are not so unequal, as that some are appointed to the heaviest toil for their support, and others left to the free, unconstrained enjoyment of whatever gratifications their fancy suggests. The distinction between us is not that of much business and none at all; it is not, that I may live as I can, and you as you please;

pleasure; a different employment constitutes it. The mechanic has his part assigned him, the scholar his, the wealthy and powerful theirs, each has his task to perform, his talent to improve,—has barely so much time for his pleasure, as is necessary for recruiting himself—as is consistent with habitual seriousness, and may rather qualify than interrupt it.

We are furnished with numerous arguments, why the graver occupations should be remitted—why the humour for gaiety and mirth should be allowed its place; and no man in his right mind ever taught the contrary. Let the delights of sense have their season, but let them stand confined to it; the same absurdity follows the excess on either side, our never using, and our never quitting them.

Be not *over wise*, is an excellent rule; but it is a rule full as good, and much more wanted—That *some wisdom* should be sought—That dress and diversion should not take up all our hours—That more time should not be spent in adorning our persons, than in improving our minds—That the beautified sepulchre should not be our exact resemblance, much shew and ornament without, and within nothing but stench and rottenness—That barely to pass our time should not be all the account we make of it, but that some profit should be consulted as well as some delight.

§ 145. On Pleasure.

SECT. IV.

Again, no pleasure can be innocent, from which our health is a sufferer. You are no more to shorten your days, than *with one stroke to end them*; and we are suicides, but in a different way, if wantonness and luxury be our gradual destruction, or despair our instant. It is self-murder, to take from our continuance here any part of that term, to which the due care of ourselves would have extended it; and our life, probably falls a more criminal sacrifice to our voluptuousness, than to our impatience.

When we throw off the load, which Providence has thought fit to lay upon us, we fail greatly in a proper deference to its wisdom, in a due submission to its will; but then we have to plead, sufferings too grievous to be sustained—a distress too mighty to be contended with; a plea, which can by no means justify us; yet how preferable to any, than he can alledge, who, in the midst of all things that can give a relish to his being, neglects the preservation

of it—who abuses the conveniencies of life to its waste, and turns its very comforts to its ruin? Or, could we suppose our pleasures disordering our constitution, after a manner not likely to contribute to its decay, they would not even then be exempted from guilt: to preserve yourself should not solely be your concern, but to maintain your most perfect state: every part and every power of your frame claims your regard; and it is great ingratitude towards him, who gave us our faculties, when we *in any wise* obstruct their free use. The proper thankfulness to God for our life is to be expressed by our care about it; both by keeping it, 'till he pleases to require it; and by so preserving it, that it may be fit for all those purposes, to which he has appointed it.

Further, the pleasure is, undoubtedly, criminal, which is not adapted to our fortune—which either impairs it, or hinders an application of it to what has the principal claim upon it.

If actions, otherwise the most commendable, lose their merit, when they disqualify us for continuing them—if generosity changes its name, when it suits not our circumstances; and even alms are culpable, when by bestowing them we come to want them—if the very best uses, to which we can put our wealth, are not so to draw off, as to dry the stream; we can by no means suppose, that our amusements are not to be limited, as by other considerations, so by this in particular—the expence which they create: we cannot imagine, that the restraints should not lie upon our wantonness, which lie upon our beneficence.

Be our possessions the largest, it is but a very small part of them that we have to dispose of as we think fit, on what conduces solely to our mirth and diversion. Great affluence, whatever we may account it, is really but a greater trust; the means committed to us of a more extensive provision for the necessities of our fellow-creatures; and when our maintenance—our convenience—an appearance suitable to our rank have been consulted, all that remains is the claim of others, of our family, our friends, our neighbours, of those who are most in need of us, and whom we are most obliged to assist.

In the figure we make, in our attendants, table, habit, there may be a very culpable parsimony: but in the expence which has nothing but self-gratification in view, our thrift can never transgress: Here our abstinence

abstinence is the most generous and commendable, as it at once qualifies us to relieve the wants of others, and lessens our own—as it sets us above the world, at the time that it enables us to be a blessing to it.

There is not a nobler quality to distinguish us, than that of an indifference to ourselves—a readiness to forego our own liking for the ease and advantage of our fellow-creatures. And it is but justice, indeed, that the conveniencies of many should prescribe to those of one: whatever his fortune may be, as he owes all the service he has from it to the concurrence of numbers, he ought to make it of benefit to them, and by no means to conclude, that what they are not to take from him, they are not to share.

Nor should it be unremarked, that the gratifications, best suited to nature, are of all the cheapest: she, like a wise parent, has not made those things needful to the well-being of any of us, which are prejudicial to the interests of the rest. We have a large field for enjoyment, at little or no charge, and may very allowably exceed the bounds of this; but we should always remember, that the verge of right is the entrance upon wrong—that the indulgence, which goes to the full extent of a lawful expence, approaches too near a criminal one, to be wholly clear from it.

Again, Care should be taken that our pleasures be in character.

The *station* of some, the *profession* of others, and an *advanced age* in all, require that we should decline many pleasures allowable to those of an inferior rank—of a different profession—of much younger years.

Do your *decisions* constitute the *law*—does your *honour* balance the plebeian's *sabb*? How very fitting is it that you should never be seen eager on trifles—intent on boyish sports—unbent to the lowest amusements of the populace—solicitous after gratifications, which may shew, that neither your sagacity is greater, nor your scruples fewer than what are found in the very meanest of the community!

Am I set apart to recommend a reasonable and useful life—to represent the world as a scene of vanity and folly, and propose the things above as only proper to engage our affections? how ungraceful a figure do I then make, when I join in all the common amusements—when the world seems to delight me full as much as my hearers,

and the only difference between us is, that their words and actions correspond, and mine are utterly inconsistent!

Have you attained the years, which extinguish the relish of many enjoyments—which bid you expect the speedy conclusion of the few remaining, and ought to instruct you in the emptiness of all those of the sensual kind? We expect you should leave them to such who can taste them better, and who know them less. The massy vestment ill becomes you, when you sink under its weight; the gay assembly, when your dim eyes cannot distinguish the persons composing it: your feet scarcely support you; attend not, therefore, where the contest is, whose motions are the gracefulest: fly the representation designed to raise the mirth of the spectators, when you can only remind them of their coffins.

Lastly, every pleasure should be avoided, that is an offence to the scrupulous, or a snare to the indiscreet. I ought to have nothing more at heart than my brother's innocence, except my own; and when there are so many ways of entertaining ourselves, which admit of no misconstruction, why should I chuse such as afford occasion for any?

To be able greatly to benefit our fellow-creatures is the happiness of few, but not to hurt them is in the power of all; and when we cannot do the world much good, we must be very unthinking indeed, if we endeavour not to do it the least possible mischief.

How this action will appear, to what interpretation it is liable, ought to be our consideration in whatever we engage. We are here so much interested in each other's morals, that, if we looked not beyond our present being, it should never be a point indifferent to us, what notions our conduct may propagate, and for what corruptions it may be made the plea: but professing the doctrine of *Christ* as our rule, we can in nothing more directly oppose it, than in taking those liberties, by which the virtue of any is endangered. Which of our pleasures have this pernicious tendency, it will be more proper for my readers to recollect, than for me to describe. To those who are in earnest I have said enough; to the insincere more would be fruitless. What has been said deserves, I think, some consideration, and that it may have a serious one, is the most earnest wish of,

Dear Sir,

Your, &c.

§ 146. *A Letter to a young Nobleman, soon after his leaving School.*

SIR,

The obligations I have to your family cannot but make me solicitous for the welfare of every member of it, and for that of yourself in particular, on whom its honours are to descend.

Such instructions and such examples, as it has been your happiness to find, must, necessarily, raise great expectations of you, and will not allow you any praise for a common degree of merit. You will not be thought to have worth, if you have not a distinguished worth, and what may suit the concurrence of so many extraordinary advantages.

In low life, our good or bad qualities are known to few—to those only who are related to us, who converse with, or live near, us. In your station, you are exposed to the notice of a kingdom. The excellencies or defects of a youth of quality make a part of polite conversation—are a topic agreeable to all who have been liberally educated; to all who are not amongst the meanest of the people.

Should I, in any company, begin a character of my friend with the hard name, whom I hope you left well at,—they would naturally ask me, What relation he bore to the Emperor's minister? When I answered, That I had never heard of his bearing any; that all I knew of him was, his being the son of a German merchant, sent into this kingdom for education; I, probably, should be thought impertinent, for introducing such a subject; and I certainly should soon be obliged to drop it, or be wholly disregarded, were I unwise enough to continue it.

But if, upon a proper occasion, I mentioned, that I had known the Honourable ——— from his infancy, and that I had made such observations on his capacity, his application, his attainments, and his general conduct, as induced me to conclude, he would one day be an eminent ornament and a very great blessing to his country, I should have an hundred questions asked me about him—my narrative would appear of consequence to all who heard it, and would not fail to engage their attention.

I have, I must own, often wondered, that the consideration of the numbers, who are continually remarking the behaviour of the persons of rank among us, has had so little influence upon them—has not produced

a quite different effect from what, alas! we every where sadly experience.

Negligere quid de se quisque sentiat, non solum arrogantis est, sed etiam omnino dissoluti. I need not tell you where the remark is: it has, indeed, so much obvious truth, that it wants no support from authority. Every generous principle must be extinct in him, who knows that it is said of him, or that it justly may be said of him—How different is this young man from his noble father! the latter took every course that could engage the public esteem: the former is as industrious to forfeit it. The Sire was a pattern of religion, virtue, and every commendable quality: his descendant is an impious, ignorant, profligate wretch: raised above others, but to have his folly more public—high in his rank; only to extend his infamy.

A thirst after fame may have its inconveniencies, but which are by no means equal to those that attend a contempt of it. Our earnestness in its pursuit may possibly slacken our pursuit of true desert; but indifferent we cannot be to reputation, without being so to virtue.

In those remarks you, Sir, are no farther concerned, than as you must, sometimes, converse with the persons to whom they may be applied, and your detestation of whom one cannot do too much to increase. *Bad examples* may justly raise our fears even for him, who has been the most wisely educated, and is the most happily disposed: no caution against them is superfluous: in the place, in which you are at present, you will meet with them in all shapes.

Under whatever disadvantages I offer you my advice, I am thus far qualified for giving it, that I have experienced some of the dangers which will be your trial, and had sufficient opportunity of observing others. The observations I have made, that are at all likely to be of service to you, either from their own weight, or the hints they may afford for your improving upon them, I cannot conceal from you. What comes from him who wishes you so well, and so much esteems you, will be sufficiently recommended by its motives; and may, therefore, possibly be read with a partiality in its favour, that shall make it of more use than it could be of from any intrinsic worth.

But, without farther preface or apology, let me proceed to the points that I think deserving your more particular consideration;

tion; and begin with what, certainly, should above all other things, be considered—RELIGION. It is, indeed, what every man says he has more or less considered; and by this, every man acknowledges its importance: yet, when we enquire into the consideration that has been given it, we can hardly persuade ourselves, that a point of the least consequence could be so treated. To our examination here we usually sit down *resolved*, how far our *conviction* shall extend.

In the pursuit of natural or mathematical knowledge we engage, disposed to take things as we find them—to let our assent be directed by the evidence we meet with: but the doctrines of religion each inspects, not in order to inform himself what he ought to believe and practise; but to reconcile them with his present faith and way of life—with the passions he favours—with the habits he has contracted.

And that this is, really, the case, is evident, from the little alteration there is in the manners of any, when they know as much of religion as they ever intend to know. You see them the same persons as formerly; they are only furnished with arguments, or excuses, they had not before thought of; or with objections to any rules of life differing from those by which they guide themselves; which objections they often judge the only defence their own practice stands in need of.

I am sure, Sir, that to one of your understanding, the absurdity of such a way of proceeding can want no proof; and that your bare attention to it is your sufficient guard against it.

Religion is either wholly founded on the fears or fancies of mankind, or it is, of all matters, the most serious, the weightiest, the most worthy of our regard. There is no mean. Is it a dream, and no more? Let the human race abandon, then, all pretences to reason. What we call such is but the more exquisite sense of upright, unclad, two-legged brutes; and that is the best you can say of us. We then are brutes, and so much more wretched than other brutes, as destined to the miseries they feel not, and deprived of the happiness they enjoy; by our foresight anticipating our calamities, by our reflection recalling them.—Our being is without an aim; we can have no purpose, no design, but what we ourselves must sooner or later despise. We are formed either to drudge for a life, that, upon such a condition, is not worth our

preserving; or to run a circle of enjoyments, the censure of *all* which is, that we cannot long be pleased with *any one of them*. Disinterestedness, generosity, public spirit, are idle, empty sounds; terms, which imply no more, than that we should neglect our own happiness to promote that of others.

What *Tully* has observed on the connexion there is between religion, and the virtues which are the chief support of society, is, I am persuaded, well known to you.

A proper regard to social duties wholly depends on the influence that religion has upon us. Destroy, in mankind, all hopes and fears, respecting any future state; you instantly let them loose to all the methods likely to promote their immediate convenience. They, who think they have only the present hour to trust to, will not be with-held, by any refined considerations, from doing what appears to them certain to make it pass with greater satisfaction.

Now, methinks, a calm and impartial enquirer could never determine that to be a visionary scheme, the full persuasion of the truth of which approves our existence a wise design—gives order and regularity to our life—places an end in our view, confessedly the noblest that can engage it—raises our nature—exempts us from a servitude to our passions, equally debasing and tormenting us—affords us the truest enjoyment of ourselves—puts us on the due improvement of our faculties—corrects our selfishness—calls us to be of use to our fellow-creatures, to become public blessings—inspires us with true courage, with sentiments of real honour and generosity—inclines us to be such, in every relation, as suits the peace and prosperity of society—derives an uniformity to our whole conduct, and makes satisfaction its inseparable attendant—directs us to a course of action pleasing when it employs us, and equally pleasing when we either look back upon it, or attend to the expectations we entertain from it.

If the source of so many and such vast advantages can be supposed a dream of the superstitious, or an invention of the crafty, we may take our leave of certainty; we may suppose every thing, within and without us, conspiring to deceive us.

That there should be difficulties in any scheme of religion which can be offered us, is no more than what a thorough acquaintance

acquaintance with our limited capacities would induce us to expect, were we strangers to the several religions that prevailed in the world, and purposed, upon enquiry into their respective merits, to embrace that which came best recommended to our belief.

But all objections of difficulties must be highly absurd in either of these cases—

When the creed you oppose, on account of its difficulties, is attended with fewer than that which you would advance in its stead: or—

When the whole of the practical doctrines of a religion are such, as, undeniably, contribute to the happiness of mankind, in whatever state, or under whatsoever relations, you can consider them.

To reject a religion thus circumstanced, for some points in its scheme less level to our apprehension, appears to me, I confess, quite as unreasonable, as it would be to abstain from food, till we could be satisfied about the origin, insertion, and action of the muscles that enable us to swallow it.

I would, in no case, have you rest upon mere authority; yet as authority will have its weight, allow me to take notice, that men of the greatest penetration, the acutest reasoning, and the most solid judgment, have been on the side of christianity—have expressed the firmest persuasion of its truth.

I cannot forgive myself, for having so long overlooked Lord Bacon's Philosophical Works. It was but lately I began to read them; and one part of them I laid down, when I took my pen to write this. The more I know of that extraordinary man, the more I admire him; and cannot but think his understanding as much of a size beyond that of the rest of mankind, as *Virgil* makes the stature of *Museus*, with respect to that of the multitude surrounding him—

Medium nam plurima turba
Hunc habet, atque humeris extantem suspicit altis.
ÆN. L. VI. 667, 8.

or as *Homer* represents *Diana's* height among the nymphs sporting with her—

Παρθένῳ δ' ὤπασεν ἑστὰ ἰχθυὶ καὶ μέγα κεν.
OD. I. VI. 107.

Throughout his writings there runs a vein of piety: you can hardly open them, but you find some or other testimony of the full conviction entertained by him, that christianity had an especial claim to our regard.

He, who so clearly saw the defects in every science—saw from whence they proceeded, and had such amazing sagacity, as to discover how they might be remedied, and to point out those very methods, the pursuit of which has been the remedy of many of them—He, who could discern thus much, left it to the wifings of the following age, to discover any weakness in the foundation of religion.

To him and Sir *Isaac Newton* I might add many others, of eminent both natural and acquired endowments, the most unsuspected favourers of the christian religion; but those two, as they may be considered standing at the head of mankind, would really be dishonoured, were we to seek for any weight, from mere authority, to the opinions they had jointly patronized, to the opinions they had maintained, after the strictest enquiry what ground there was for them.

That the grounds of christianity were thus enquired into by them, is certain: for the one appears, by the quotations from the *bible* interpersed throughout his works, to have read it with an uncommon care; and it is well known, that the other made it his chief study in the latter part of his life.

It may, indeed, appear very idle, to produce authorities on one side, when there are none who deserve the name of such on the other. Whatever else may have rendered the writers in favour of infidelity remarkable, they, certainly, have not been so for their sagacity or science—for any superiorem either natural, or acquired, endowments. And I cannot but think, that he who takes up his pen, in order to deprive the world of the advantages which would accrue to it were the christian religion generally received, shews so wrong a head in the very design of his work, as would leave no room for doubt, how little credit he could gain by the conduct of it.

Is there a just foundation for our assent to the christian doctrine? Nothing should then be more carefully considered by us, or have a more immediate and extensive influence upon our practice.

Shall I be told, that if this were a right consequence, there is a profession, in which quite different persons would be found, than we at present meet with?

I have too many failings myself, to be willing to censure others; and too much love for truth, to attempt an excuse for what admits of none. But let me say, that consequences are not the less true, for their truth

truth being disregarded. Lucian's description of the philosophers of his age is more odious, than can belong to any set of men, in our time: and as it was never thought, that the precepts of philosophy ought to be slighted, because they who inculcated, disgraced them; neither can it be any reflection on nobler rules, that they are recommended by persons who do not observe them.

Of this I am as certain as I can be of any thing. That our practice is no infallible test of our principles; and that we may do religion no injury by our speculations, when we do it a great deal by our manners. I should be very unwilling to rely on the strength of my own virtue in so many instances, that it exceedingly mortifies me to reflect on their number: yet, in whichever of them I offended, it would not be for want of conviction, how excellent a precept, or precepts, I had transgressed—it would not be because I did not think, that a life throughout agreeable to the commands of the religion I profess ought to be constantly my care.

How frequently we act contrary to the obligations, which we readily admit ourselves to be under, can scarcely be otherwise than matter of every one's notice; and if none of us infer from those pursuits, which tend to destroy our health, or our understanding, or our reputation, that he, who engages in them, is persuaded that disease, or infamy, or a second childhood, deserves his choice; neither should it be taken for granted, that he is not inwardly convinced of the worth of religion, who appears, at some times, very different from what a due regard thereto ought to make him.

Inconsistency, is through the whole compass of our acting, so much our reproach, that it would be great injustice towards us, to charge each defect in our morals, upon corrupt and bad principles. For a proof of the injustice of such a charge, I am confident, none need look beyond themselves. Each will find the complaint of *Medea* in the poet, very proper to be made his own—I see and approve of what is right, at the same time that I do what is wrong.

Don't think, that I would justify the faults of any, and much less theirs, who, professing themselves set apart to promote the interests of religion and virtue, and having a large revenue assigned them, both that they may be more at leisure for so noble a work, and that their pains in it

may be properly recompensed, are, certainly, extremely blameable, not only when they countenance the immoral and irreligious; but even, when they take no care to reform them.

All I aim at, is, That the cause may not suffer by its advocates.—That you may be just to it, whatever you may dislike in them.—That their failures may have the allowance, to which the frailty of human nature is entitled.—That you may not, by their manners, when worst, be prejudiced against their *Doctrines*; as you would not censure philosophy, for the faults of philosophers.

The prevalency of any practice cannot make it to be either safe, or prudent; and I would fain have your's and mine such, as may alike credit our religion, and understanding: without the great reproach of both, we cannot profess to believe that rule of life, to be from God, which, yet, we model to our passions and interests.

Whether such a particular is my duty, ought to be the first consideration; and when it is found so, common sense suggests the next—How it may be performed.

But I must not proceed. A letter of two sheets! How can I expect, that you should give it the reading? If you can persuade yourself to do it, from the conviction of the sincere affection towards you, that has drawn me into this length; I promise you, never again to make such a demand on your patience.—I will never again give you so troublesome a proof of my friendship. I have here begun a subject, which I am very desirous to prosecute; and every letter, you may hereafter receive from me upon it, whatever other recommendation it may want, shall, certainly, not be without that of brevity.

Dean Bolton.

§ 147. *Three Essays on the Employment of Time.*

P R E F A C E.

The essays I here publish, though at first penned for the benefit of some of the author's neighbours in the country, may, it is hoped, from the alterations since made in them, be of more general use. The subject of them is, in itself of the highest importance, and could, therefore, never be unseasonably considered; but the general practice, at present, more especially entitles it to our notice. The principles on which their argumentative part proceeds, are denied by none whose conviction it consults. Such as regard the human frame as only

in its mechanism excelling that of beasts—such as would deprive man's breast of social affections, exempt him from all apprehensions of a deity, and confine his hopes to his present existence, are not the *persons* whom any thing here said proposes to affect. They are not, I mean, directly applied to in this *work*; but even their benefit it may be said consequentially to intend, as it would certainly contribute thereto, could it properly operate on those whose advantage is its immediate aim.

We have been told, by very good judges of human nature, how engaging virtue would be, if it came under the notice of sense. And what is a right practice, but virtue made, in some measure, the object of our sense? What is a man ever acting reasonably, but, if I may so speak, impersonated virtue—Virtue in a visible shape, brought into view, presenting itself to the sight, and through the sight as much affecting the mind, as it could be affected by any elegance of form, by any of the beauties of colouring or proportion.

The notions most dishonourable to the *deity*, and to the *human species*, are often, I suspect, first taken up, and always, certainly, confirmed by remarking how they act whose speculations express the greatest honour towards *both*.

When the strongest sense of an all-powerful and wise, a most holy and just Governor of the world, is possessed by those who shew not the least concern to please him—When reason, choice, civil obligations, a future recompence, have for their advocates such as are governed by humour, passion, appetite; or who deny themselves no present pleasure or advantage, for any thing that an hereafter promises; it naturally leads others, first, to think it of little moment which *side* is taken on these points, and then, to take *that* which suits the manners of them who, in their declarations, are its warmest opposers.

Whereas, were the *apprehensions* that do justice to a superintending providence—an immaterial principle in man—his liberty—his duties in society—his hopes at his dissolution, to be universally evidenced by a suitable practice; the great and manifest advantage arising from them would be capable of suppressing every *doubt* of their truth, would prevent the entrance of any, or would soon remove it.

As, indeed, all that we are capable of knowing in our present state, appears either immediately to regard its wants, or to be

connected with what regards them, it is by no means a slight confirmation of the truth of a doctrine, That the persuasion thereof is of the utmost consequence to our present well-being. And thus the great advantages that are in this life derivable from the belief of a future retribution—that are here the proper fruits of such a belief, may be considered as evincing how well it is founded—how reasonably it is entertained. On this it may be of some use more largely to insist.

What engagements correspond to the conviction that the state in which we now are is but the passage to a better, is considered in the last of these essays: and that, when so engaged, we are acting the *part* befitting our nature and our situation, seems manifest both on account of the approbation it has from our calmest hours, our most serious deliberation and freest judgment, and likewise on account of the testimony it receives even from them who act a quite contrary one. What they conform not to, they applaud; they acknowledge their failures to be such; they admire the worth, which they cannot bring themselves to cultivate.

If we look into the writers who supposed all the pleasures of man to be those of his body, and all his views limited to his present existence; we find them, in the rule of life they gave, deserting the necessary consequences of their *supposition*, and prescribing a morality utterly inconsistent with it. Even when they taught that what was good or evil was to be determined by our feeling only—that right or wrong was according to the pleasure or pain that would ensue to us during the continuance of our present frame, since after its dissolution we have nothing to hope or fear; their practical directions were, however, that we ought to be strictly just, severely abstinent, true to our friendships, steady in the pursuit of honour and virtue, attentive to the public welfare, and willing to part with our lives in its defence.

Such they admitted man ought to be—such they exhorted him to be, and, therefore, when they would allow him to act only upon *motives* utterly incongruous to his being this person, it followed either that these were wrongly assigned, or that a conduct was required from him unsuitable to his nature.

That his obligations were rightly stated was on all hands agreed. The mistake was in the inducements alledged for discharging them.

them. Nothing was more improbable than his fulfilling the duties this *febene* appointed him, if he was determined by it in judging of the consequences of his actions——what good or hurt they would do him——what happiness or misery would be their result.

While the Epicureans admitted justice to be preferable to injustice——a public spirit, to private selfish views; while they acknowledged it more fitting that we should sacrifice life to the good of our country, than preserve it by deserting the common welfare; they must, I think, be regarded as authorising a preference of the principles which will make man just and public-spirited, to those which will dispose him to be unjust, and wholly attentive to his own little interests.

Let us see, then, what will be the practical consequences of adopting or rejecting the *Epicurean* tenet of our having nothing to hope for beyond the grave.

The value we set on life is shewn by what we do to preserve it, and what we suffer rather than part with it. We support ourselves by the hardest labour, the severest drudgery, and we think death a much greater evil, than to struggle for years with disease and pain, despairing of cure, and even of any long intervals of ease. Such, ordinarily, is our love of life. And this desire to keep it cannot but be greatly increased, when we are induced to think that once lost it is so for ever. To be without all hope of again enjoying the blessing we thus highly prize, must naturally disincline us to hazard it, and dispose us for what will endanger its continuance. He who is persuaded that *corporeal pleasure* is all he has to expect, and that it is confined to his present existence, must, if he acts agreeably to such a persuasion, be wholly intent on the pursuit of that pleasure, and dread nothing more than its coming to an end, or being interrupted. Hence, if his term of life would be shorter, or any greater distress would accrue to him by adhering to truth and justice, than by departing from them——if he were to be at present more a loser by assisting his friend, than by forsaking him——if he could promise himself a larger share of sensual gratifications from betraying his country, than from serving it faithfully, he would be false and unjust, he would be perfidious to his friend, and a traitor to his country. All those sentiments and actions that express an entire attach-

ment to the *delights of sense*, and the strongest reluctance to forego them, are strictly in character when we look not beyond them——when we acknowledge not any higher *satisfactions*, and behold *these* as expiring with us, and sure never to be again tasted.

Whereas the prospect of a returning life, and of enjoyments in it far superior to any we now experience, or promise ourselves, has a necessary tendency to lessen our solicitude about the existence here appointed us. We cannot well be reconciled to the loss of our being, but are easily so to its change; and death considered as only its change, as the passage from a less to a more desirable state, will, certainly, have the terror of its appearance much abated. The conviction that there is a greater good in reserve for us than any pleasure which earth can afford, and that there is something far more to be feared by us than any pain we can now be made to suffer, will, in proportion to its strength, render us indifferent to the delights and conveniences of our abode on earth, and dispose us to qualify ourselves for obtaining that greater good, and avoiding that so much more to be dreaded evil. In these considerations of life and death, of happiness and misery, virtue has its proper support. We are by them brought to judge rightly of the part becoming us, and to adhere to it immovably: they furnish sufficient inducements to avoid falsehood and injustice, of whatever immediate advantage we may be thereby deprived——they encourage us to serve our friends and country with the utmost fidelity, notwithstanding all the inconveniences that can be supposed to attend it——they are, indeed, proper incitements to prefer the public welfare to our own safety, while they represent to us how much our gain thereby would overbalance our loss.

Brutes in our end and expectations, how can we be otherwise in our pursuits? But if the reasoning principle in us be an incorruptible one, and its right or wrong application in this embodied state affect the whole of our future existence; we have, in that apprehension, the most powerful motive to act throughout in conformity to our rational nature, or, which is the same thing in other words, never to swerve from virtue——to despise alike danger and pleasure when standing in competition with our duty.

Thus, when *Socrates*, in *Plato's Phædo*, has proved the immortality of our soul, he

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considers it as a necessary consequence of the belief thereof, "That we should be employed in the culture of our minds—in such care of them as shall not only regard that term, to which we give the name of life, but the whole which follows it—in making ourselves as wise and good as may be, since on it our safety entirely depends, the soul carrying hence nothing with it, but its good or bad actions, its virtues or vices, and these constituting its happiness or misery to all eternity."

So, when the elder *Scipio* is introduced by *Tully*, apprising the younger, "That what is called our life, may be more properly styled our death—that we truly live when we are freed from the fetters of our body;" he proceeds to observe, how much it then concerned him to be just—to promote the public welfare—to make true glory his aim, doing what is right without regard to any advantage it will now yield him, despising popular opinion, adhering to virtue for its real worth." And the youth thus instructed, professes, "That after such information into what state he is to pass, he would not be wanting to himself: unmindful he had not been of his ancestor's worth, but to copy it should now be his more especial care, since encouraged thereto by so great a reward."

Lucan, representing the inhabitants of this part of Europe as persuaded that the soul survived the dissolution of the body, congratulates them, indeed, only on the happiness they enjoyed in an opinion that freed them from the most tormenting of all fears, the dread of death—that made them act with so much bravery and intrepidity. But when he admits a contempt of death to be the proper effect of this opinion, he must be considered as allowing it all that practical influence which as naturally results from it, as such an indifference to life doth, and has the same connexion with it.

If, therefore, the persuasion that death renders us utterly insensible, be a persuasion that unmans us quite—that disposes to a course of action most unworthy of us—that is extremely prejudicial to society, and tends, in every way, to our own greatest hurt or debasement, we may well suppose it an erroneous one; since it is in the highest degree improbable, that there should be any truth in a notion the reception of

which so far operates to the prejudice of mankind—so necessarily contributes to introduce a general disorder.

On the other hand, if, from the conviction that there is a recompence for us beyond the grave, we derive sentiments most becoming us—if from it the worthiest actions proceed—if it be the source of the greatest both private and public good—if with it be connected the due discharge of our duty in the several relations in which we are placed—if it alone can lead us to perfect our nature, and can furnish our state with satisfactory enjoyments; there may seem sufficient grounds to conclude that there is such a recompence; the persuasion thereof, thus affecting us, may well appear most reasonably entertained.

When all those principles, of whose truth we have the greatest certainty, conduct us to happiness, it is natural to think that the influence of any principle upon our happiness, should be no improper test of its truth.

If there be no surer token of a right practice, than its tendency to promote the common good, can we but judge that to be a right opinion, which has undeniably, in an eminent degree, such a tendency?

When the difficulties that, under a general corruption, attend our adherence to virtue, are only to be surmounted by the prospect of future reward; one knows not how to believe that the proper inducement to our acting a part so becoming us—so much our praise, should be no other than a chimerical view, a romantic and utterly vain expectation.

When error is manifestly the cause of whatever ill we do or suffer, it is extremely improbable, that to an erroneous notion we must stand indebted for the best use of life, and its most solid satisfactions.

But it may be asked—where does this opinion produce these boasted effects? Among them who profess it their firmest belief that there is a future recompence, how few do we find better men for it—more regular in their manners, or more useful to the world, than they would have been without any such persuasion?

How far any truth shall operate upon us—how far it shall influence us, depends upon our application of it, upon our attention to it. Experience furnishes the utmost certainty of a vast variety of particulars: highly interesting our present welfare, which yet we overlook, we give ourselves little or no concern about, tho' we thereby make ourselves

selves the severest sufferers; and may be almost as sure as we can be of any thing, that our unconcernedness about them must be attended with consequences thus fatal to us. The several rules which regard the lengthening of life—the preservation of health—the enjoyment of ease, though they carry with them the clearest evidence of their importance, how very little weight have they with the generality of mankind—how unheeded are they when opposing an eager appetite, a strong inclination! while yet these rules are acknowledged to remain as true, as worthy of our notice, as certain in their salutary effects when observed, as if all that practical regard to which they are entitled, was paid them; and we may be as justly thought endowed with a capacity of discovering those effects in order to their profiting us, as if they universally took place.

What benefit was intended in qualifying us for the discernment of any truth, is by no means to be inferred from what *ordinarily ensues* to us when discerning it. A just inference as to this can only be made from regarding the dictates of reason upon such a truth being discerned by us; or, what use of its discernment reason directs us to make.

When we are less wicked than very bad principles prompt us to be, which is often the case; these are, nevertheless, full as blameable as they would be if we were to act consistently with them. That they are not *pursued*, is, as to them, quite an accidental point; in reason and nature they should be; and therefore are fitly chargeable with all the consequences that acting according to them would produce.

So, on the other hand, though it must be confessed, that, with the best principles, our course of life is, frequently, very faulty; the objection must lye not to the nature or kind of their influence, but to a weakness

of it, which is *our* crime, and not *their* defects. We will not let them act upon us; as they are qualified to do. Their worth is to be estimated by the worth they are suited to produce. And it would be full as absurd, when we will not mind our way, to deny that the light can be of any help to us in seeing it; as to deny the serviceableness of any principle, because we fail in its application.

Nor is it, indeed, only our unhappiness that we are inattentive to what *the belief of a future recompence* requires from us; religion itself, is, alas! every where abused to the obstructing the proper effects of this belief. I mean, that whatever religion is any where professed, some or other rite or doctrine of it *dons* favour, as in Paganism and Mohammedism; or is *so construed*, as in Judaism and Christianity, that it is made to favour a departure from the practice which suits the persuasion of a future reward. The reproach that belonged to the Jews in our Saviour's time, they have, as far as appears, deserved ever since; that by their scrupulous regard to the lesser points of their law, they think they make amends for the grossest neglect of its most important precepts. And with respect to us Christians*, whence is it, that there is so little virtue among us—that we are throughout so corrupt, but from taking sanctuary for our crimes in our very religion,—from perverting its most holy institutions and doctrines to be our full security whatsoever are our vices †?

Thus, we are either of a church in which we can be absolved of *all our sins*; or we are of the number of the elect, and cannot commit *any*; or the merits of Christ atone for our not having the merit even of honesty and sincerity; or a right faith makes amends for our most corrupt practice ‡.

* Sir Isaac Newton having observed, That the prophecies concerning Christ's first coming were for setting up the Christian religion, adds, which all nations have since corrupted, &c. Observe upon the Proph. of Dan. ch. p. 252.

† The general and great defect in those that profess the Christian faith is, that they hope for life eternal, without performing those conditions, whereupon it is promised in the Gospel, namely, repentance and reformation.—They will trust in a *frankish, liveliest faith*, or to some penances, and satisfactions, and commutations made with God, doing what he hath not required instead of what he hath commanded. No *persecutions* shall prevail to move and excite them to do this, no reasons, arguments, or demonstration, no not the express words of God, that it is necessary to be done; or to forbear to censure them as Enemies to the grace of God, who do with clear and express Scripture shew the absolute necessity of it. *Quintan's Sermons*, p. 166, 167.

‡ I heartily wish, that by public authority it were so ordered, that no man should ever preach or print this doctrine, That Faith alone justifies, unless he joins this together with it, That universal obedience is necessary to salvation. *Chillingworth's Relig. of Prot.* p. 362.

By our zeal in our opinions we grow cool in our piety and practical duties. *Epist. Dedicat. prefixed to the Discourse of Liberty of Prop.*

We have prayers, sacraments, fasts, that are never thought of to improve us in virtue, but to supply the want of it—to quiet our consciences under the most culpable gratification of our lusts.

How the belief of a future recompence should, in reason, affect our practice—what its proper and natural influence is, solely concerns the present argument. It seems enough, in the case before us, that no one can be consistent with himself, but, if he has any hopes of happiness in another world, his conduct will be regular, becoming, rational: and, that where we find these hopes entertained on mature consideration, justly reasoned upon, duly attended to, there we certainly find great parity of morals, a strict regard to the part befitting a reasonable creature, and every other advantage ascribed to *them*. If I cannot be allowed to infer from hence that they are well founded, they have still for their support all those arguments in favour of a final retribution, with which I have not at all meddled, nor in the least weakened by any thing I may have less pertinently observed. The subject of the third of the following essays led me to the remarks here made; and to me they appear not immaterial. I cannot, indeed, bring myself to think but that the hopes which induce me to act most agreeably to my Creator's will, he has formed me to entertain; and will not let me be disappointed in them.

Of one thing I am sure, that they who suffer the persuasion of a future happiness to operate, as it ought, on their practice, constantly experience their practice adding strength to their persuasion; the better they become by their belief, the more confirmed they become in it. This is a great deal to say on its behalf. What weightier recommendation to our assent can any doctrine have, than that, as it tends to improve us in virtue, so the more virtuous we are, the more firmly we assent to it; or, the better judges we are of truth, the fuller assurance we have of its truth?

§ 148. On the Employment of Time.

ESSAY THE FIRST.

Time dumum intelligis, quid facitandum tibi, quid vitandum sit, cum audieris quid natura tua debet.
SEN. Ep. 121.

"Amazing! that a creature, so warm in the pursuit of her pleasures, should never cast one thought towards her happiness."
—A reflection this, made indeed by a comic writer, but not unworthy the most serious.

To be intent on pleasure, yet negligent of happiness, is to be careful for what will ease us a few moments of our life, and yet, without any regard to what will distress us for many years of it.

When I study my happiness, I consult the satisfaction of the whole continuance of my being—I endeavour, that throughout it I may suffer as little, and enjoy myself as much, as my nature and situation will admit. Happiness is lasting pleasure; its pursuit is, really, that of pleasure, with as small an alloy as possible of pain. We cannot, therefore, provide for our happiness, without taking our share of pleasure; though, as is every where but too evident, our eagerness after Pleasure may plunge us into the misery we are unable to support.

Nothing, indeed, is more specious than the general term Pleasure. It carries with it the idea of something which must be permitted us by our Maker; since we know not how to suppose him forbidding us to taste what he has disposed us to relish. His having formed us to receive pleasure, is our licence to take it. This I will admit to be true, under proper restrictions.

It is true, that from our nature and constitution we may collect wherein we act agreeably to our Creator's will, and wherein we act contrary to it; but the mischief is, we commonly mistake our nature, we miscall it; we call that it which is but a part of it, or the corruption of it; and we thence make conclusions, by which when we govern our practice, we soon find ourselves in great difficulties and distress.

For instance, we call our passions our nature; then infer, that, in gratifying them, we follow nature; and, being thus convinced that their gratification must be quite lawful, we allow ourselves in it, and are undone by it. Whereas, the body is as much the man, as his passions are his nature; a part of it, indeed, they are, but the lowest part; and which, if more regarded than the higher and nobler, it must be as fatal to us, as to be guided rather by what is agreeable to our appetite, than conducive to our health. Of this more hereafter.

The call of nature being the favourite topic of all the men of pleasure—of all who act the most in contradiction to nature, I will confine the whole of the following essay to the consideration of it, so far as it relates to the employment of our time: and shew how our time should be employed, if we have a just regard to our nature—if what it requires be consulted by us.

That man is the work of a wise agent, is in the clearest manner discovered by the marks of wisdom, that shew themselves in his frame—by the contrivance and skill, that each part of it expresses—by the exact proportion and suitable disposition, that the several parts of it have to each other, and by their respective fitness to promote the well-being of the whole.

When we must thus acknowledge the great wisdom exerted in our structure; when we are so capable of discerning its beauties and advantages, and so fully know their preservation and improvement to depend upon ourselves, upon our own endeavours, care and pains: we cannot possibly be at a loss to discover what our wise Maker must, in this particular, expect from us. The duty of man is as certainly known from his nature—what he ought to do for himself is as fully understood from what he can do, as the uses of any machine are understood by a thorough acquaintance with its powers.

I can no more doubt for what I am intended—what must be required of me, when I see plainly what I am able to effect; than I can question for what purposes a watch or a clock is designed, when I am duly apprised how the different parts of it act upon each other, to what they all concur, and to what only.

We want no reasoning to convince us, that a frame so curious as the human, must be made in order to its continuance, as long as the materials composing it will admit; and that we ourselves must give it such continuance: how this is shortened, how it is prolonged, we are likewise all of us fully sensible. There is no man but perceives what will hasten his dissolution, and what will probably, retard it; by what management of himself he is sure to pass but few years in the world; and by what he is likely to be upheld in it for many. Here then our rule is obvious; these notices afforded us to make it so: when we are taught, that the support of our life must be agreeable to him from whom we received it, and that we are appointed to give it this support, that it must come from *ourselves*, from what we do in order to it; we are at the same time instructed to regard all things contributing to it as enjoined us, and all things detrimental to, and inconsistent with it, as forbidden us; we have it suggested to us, that we are properly employed, when we consult the due preservation of life, and that the engagements are improper, are blameable, that hinder it.

Thus, to spend our time well, we must give our bodies such exercise, such rest, and other refreshments, as their subsistence demands; and we mis-spend it, when we are lazy and slothful, when we are less sober, chaste and temperate; when we proceed to excesses of any kind; when we let our passions and appetites direct us: every thing in this way tends to hasten our dissolution; and therefore must be criminal, as opposing that continuance here, which our very composition shews our Maker to have designed us.

But that our frame should be barely upheld, cannot be all we are to do for it; we must preserve it in its most perfect state, in a state in which its several powers can be best exerted.

To take this care about it, is evidently required of us. Any unfitness for the functions of life is a partial death. I don't see of what we can well be more certain, than that all the health and strength, of which our constitution admits, were intended us in it; and they must, therefore, be as becoming our concern, as it is to hinder the ruin of our constitution: we know not how sufficiently to lament the loss of them, even from the advantage of which they are to us in themselves, not only from their preventing the uneasiness, the pains, and the numerous inconveniencies with which the sickly and infirm have to struggle, but likewise from the satisfaction they give us in our being, from what we feel, when our blood flows regularly, our nerves have their due tone, and our vigour is entire.

Yet these are but the least of the benefits we have from them.

We consist of two parts, of two very different parts; the one inert, passive, utterly incapable of directing itself, barely ministerial to the other, moved, animated by it. When our body has its full health and strength, the mind is so far assisted thereby, that it can bear a closer and longer application, our apprehension is readier, our imagination is livelier, we can better enlarge our compass of thought, we can examine our perceptions more strictly, and compare them more exactly; by which means we are enabled to form a truer judgment of things—to remove more effectually the mistakes into which we have been led by a wrong education, by passion, inattention, custom, example—to have a clearer view of what is best for us, of what is most for our interest, and thence determine ourselves more readily to its pursuit.

fort, and persist therein with greater resolution and steadiness.

The soundness of the body can be thus serviceable to the *mind*, and when made so, may in its turn be as much profited by *it*. The poet's observation is no less true of them, than it is of nature and art, each wants, each helps the other;

"Mutually they need each other's aid."

ROSCOM.

The mind, when not restrained by any thing deficient in its companion, and having from it all the assistance it is adapted to afford, can with much greater facility prevent that discomposure and trouble, by which our bodily *health* is ever injured, and preserve in us that quiet and peace, by which *it* is always promoted. Hence we are to conclude, that we should forbear, not only what necessarily brings on disease and decay, but whatever contributes to enfeeble and enervate us; not only what has a direct tendency to hasten our end, but likewise what lessens our activity, what abates of our vigour and spirit.—That we should also avoid whatever is in any wise prejudicial to a due consideration of things, and a right judgment of them; whatever can hinder the understanding from properly informing itself, and the will from a ready compliance with its directions. We must be intent on such a discipline of ourselves as will procure us the fullest use of our frame, as will capacitate us to receive from it the whole of the advantage it is capable of yielding us; so exercising the members of our body, consulting its conveniences, supplying its wants, that it may be the least burthenome to us, may give us the least uneasiness—that none of its motions may, through any fault of ours, be obstructed, none of its parts injured—that it may be kept in as unimpaired, as athletic a state as our endeavours can procure, and all its functions performed with the utmost exactness and readiness; so guarding, likewise, against the impressions of sense, and delusiveness of fancy, so composing our minds, purifying them, divesting them of all corrupt prejudices, that they may be in a disposition equally favourable to them, and to our bodies—that they may not be betrayed into mistakes dangerous to the welfare of either—that they may be in a condition to discern what is becoming us, what is fittest for us; desirous of discovering it, and preparing to be influenced by it.

We are thus to seek our most perfect state, such as allows us the freest use of our several powers a full liberty for the *due application of them*. And the ability thus to apply them, must be in order to our doing it, to our receiving from them whatever service they can effect.

As what is corporeal in us is of least excellence and value, our care in general about it, should bear a proportion to the little worth it has in itself—should chiefly regard the reference it has to our understanding, the assistance that it may afford our intellectual faculties.

Merely to preserve our being—to possess our members entire—to have our senses perfect—to be free from pain—to enjoy health, strength, beauty, are but very low aims for human creatures. The most perfect state of animal life can never becomingly engross the concern of a rational nature: fitted for much nobler and worthier attainments, we are by that fitness for them called to pursue them.

Ask those of either sex, who rate highest the recommendation of features, complexion, and shape—who are most intent on adorning their persons—who study most the accomplishments of an outward appearance; ask them, I say, which they think their chief endowment, and what it is that does them the highest honour? You will find them with one consent pronouncing it *their reason*. With all their folly they will not defend it as such: with their little sense, they will prefer that little to their every other fancied perfection. The finest woman in the world would rather make deformity her choice than idiocy, would rather have ugliness than incapacity her reproach.

Thus, likewise, whom do we perceive so fond of life, so desirous of reaching its longest term, that he would be willing to survive his understanding; that he would chuse to live after he ceased to reason? The health and ease, the vigour and cheerfulness that are often the lunatic's portion, would not induce the most infirm, sickly, and complaining among us, to wish himself in his stead; to wish an exchange of his own disordered body, for the other's disordered mind.

Nor does the mind only claim our chief regard, as it is thus universally acknowledged, and as it really is the principal, the most excellent, the presiding part of us, but as our well-being is necessarily connected with giving it this preference, with

bestowing the most of our care and pains upon it.

What is best for the body, what is best for the whole man, can only be discovered and provided for, by our rational faculties, by them assiduously cultivated, diligently exerted, and thence strengthened and enlarged.

Our well-being wholly depends upon the sufficient information of our understanding, upon the light in which we see things, upon the knowledge we have how far they can profit or hurt us, how the benefit they can be of to us may be derived from them, and how the hurt they can do us may be escaped.

If I think that to be good, or that to be evil, which is not such—or if I know not that to be good, or that to be evil, which is really such—or if I think there is more or less good, or more or less evil in any thing than there really is—or if what, by a proper application, might be made of very great advantage to me, I am ignorant how to make of any, or of as much as it would yield me—or if I am ignorant how to render that very little, or put at all, hurtful to me, which might have its evil either greatly lessened or wholly avoided: in all these instances, my well-being must of necessity be a sufferer; my ignorance must greatly abate of the satisfaction of my life, and heighten its uneasiness.

No one is prejudiced by his not desiring what he conceives to be good, by his disinclination towards it, by his unwillingness to embrace it. So far is this from being our case, that we are always pursuing it. The source of all our motions, the design of all our endeavours is to better ourselves, to remove from us that which is really, or comparatively evil.

What alone hurts us is our misapprehension of good, our mistakes about, our ignorance of, it. Let us fully understand it—have just conceptions of it, we then shall never deserve the blame of its being less earnestly sought after, and therefore unattained by us. The excess of our earnestness after it, is, indeed, usually the occasion of missing it. Our solicitude, our eagerness and impatience are here so great, that they won't allow us time to examine appearances—to distinguish between them and realities—to weigh what is future

against what is present—to deliberate whether we do not forego a much greater advantage hereafter, by closing with that which immediately offers; or shall not have it abundantly overbalanced, by its mischievous consequences.

We want not to be put on the pursuit of happiness, but we want very much to have that pursuit rightly directed; and as this must be done by the improvement of our rational powers, we can be interested in nothing more than in improving them, than in such an application of them, as will contribute most to perfect them.

We are so placed, that there are very few of the *objects* surrounding us, which may not be serviceable or hurtful to us; nor is that service to be obtained, or detriment avoided, otherwise than by our acquaintance with *them* and with ourselves: the more exact our knowledge of this kind is, the more we lessen the calamities, and add to the comforts of life: and it certainly must be as much the intention of our Creator, that we should attain the *utmost* good which we are capable of procuring ourselves, as that we should attain *any* for which he has qualified us.

Nor is the benefit arising to us from an enlarged understanding rendered less certain, by the uneasiness that we find to be the share of the studious, the contemplative, and learned—of them whose intellectual attainments we chiefly admire.

The philosopher's observation to his friend on *books*, that it signifies nothing *how many*, but *what* he had, is applicable to the knowledge they communicate: what it is, and not how various, is the thing that concerns us. It may extend to a prodigious number of particulars of no moment, or of very little; and that extent of it gain us all the extravagance of applause, though we have the ignorance of the vulgar, where it must be of the worst consequence.

Crowding our memory is no more improving our understanding, than filling our coffers with pebbles is enriching ourselves; and what is commonly the name of learning, what usually denominates us *very learned* is, really, no more than our memory heavily and uselessly burthened.

How high is the desert, in the more eastern parts, of him who can but read and write the language of his country? A life spent in the study of *it alone* shall be there

* There is nothing almost has done more harm to men dedicated to letters, than giving the name of study to reading, and making a man of great reading to be the same with a man of great knowledge. *Lacks of the Conduct of the Understanding.*

judged an exercise of reason most worthy of applause. And are we in these so enlightened regions, in this school of science, as we are apt to fancy it, at all more just to rational improvements? We have, indeed, no encomiums for him who is not at a loss for the meaning of any word that his native tongue furnishes; but he who is well skilled in two or three antient ones, will have the highest applause for that skill, and be considered as among them, who have distinguished themselves, by a right application of their capacities. In this number we, likewise, generally agree to place such as have passed years in only qualifying themselves either to cavil and dispute, or to disguise their ignorance on any subject, or to colour strongly, and command the passions of their hearers. We are equally favourable to them, who busy their minds on discoveries that have no foundation but in fancy and credulity—or whose whole endeavour it has been to learn what this or that man has determined on a point, wherein he was as ill qualified as themselves to make a right determination,—or who amuse themselves with theories, with trifling and vain speculations.

Let a just allowance be made for these, and such like persons, whose reputation for learning is only built on the generality miscalling it, on the prevailing mistakes about it, and who have really hurt their understandings by what is thus falsely esteemed improving them; we shall have proceeded a great way in removing the objection to the pursuit of knowledge, from the little service it is of, to such whose attainments in it we concur in acknowledging and admiring.

When our intellectual pursuits are useful, they are often limited to what is of least use. How few of us are prompted to our researches from the consideration of the degree or extent of the good derivable from them? It is humour, fancy, or sordid gain alone, that ordinarily gives rise to the very inquiries which are of advantage to the world; they seldom are made from a regard to their proper worth, from the influence they can have upon our own or others' happiness.

That the better our understanding is informed, the better it can direct us, must be

as evident to all, as that we want to be directed by it. The mind of man is as much assisted by knowledge, as his eye by light. Whatever his intellectual powers may be in themselves, they are to him according to his application of them: as the advantage he receives from his sight is according to the use he makes of it. That ignorance of his good which he might, but will not, remove, deprives him of it as certainly as an utter inability to acquaint himself with it.

In what is the improvement of our understandings, we may, indeed, be mistaken, as we may in what constitutes our true happiness; but in each case we must be wilfully so, we must be so by refusing to attend, to consider.

Could we by instinct discover our own good, as the brute distinguishes its good, all concern on our part to increase our discernment might be needless; but the endeavour after this must be in the highest degree necessary, when the more clearly we discern things, the more we are benefited, and the less hurt by them. Where is the man who is not made happier by inquiries that are rightly directed, and when he can say with the poet,

The search of truth
And moral decency hath fill'd my breast;
Hath every thought and faculty possess'd?

Of knowledge as distinct from true wisdom, it may be not unjustly observed, that the increase of it is only the increase of sorrow; but of that knowledge, the pursuit of which expresses our wisdom, we may confidently assert, that our satisfaction must advance with it. All will admit it a proof of wisdom, to judge rightly of what is most for our interest, and take such measures as suit it: and as we are qualified for this by our knowledge, by the knowledge of our own nature, and of the properties of the things without us, so far as they can contribute to our better or worse state; in the degree we are thus knowing we can only be wise, determine rightly of what is best, and use the fittest means to procure it. Attainments that serve not to this purpose may be slighted; but for such as are requisite to it, if they principally deserve not our concern, I see not what can have any title to it.

We

* Since our faculties plainly discover to us the being of a God, and the knowledge of ourselves, enough to lead us into a full and clear discovery of our duty, and great concernment; it will become us, as rational creatures, to employ those faculties we have, about what they are most adapted to, and follow the direction of nature, where it seems to point us out the way. For 'tis rational to conclude

We are, indeed, startled at the very terms, of deliberating, weighing, considering, comparing; we have affixed such ideas to them, to make them appear rather hindering the true enjoyment of ourselves than promoting it: but if we would not share the uneasiness that so many of our fellow creatures lament, we must not adopt their prejudices. In every point of consequence we use more or less consideration; and in all the pleasures that allure, in all the trifles that amuse us, we are still making comparisons, preferring one to the other, pronouncing this less, and that more worthy of our choice. Tho' none, if the philosopher may be believed, deliberate on the whole of life, all do on the parts of it: and if we fail not to compare and reason upon our *lower* enjoyments, I see not what there can be forbidding in the advice to attend seriously, to examine fairly, and to delay our choice till we have gained the instruction requisite to determine it, when the object thereof is what can be *most* for our ease and satisfaction.

But it is not, perhaps, all exercise of our reason, in a way so well deserving it, that disgusts us; it is *the degree* of application required from us, that we relish not.

1. We know not how to be reconciled to so much trouble about enlarging our discernment, and refining our judgment.

2. We do not see how such a task can suit them whose whole provision for the day is from the labour of it.

3. We find no small part of mankind so

easy under their ignorance, and mistakes, that they will not advance a step to remove them: and what greater recommendation can there be of any situation, than that they who are in it are entirely satisfied with it?

1. The pains that we are to take in order to an advantage that must infinitely overbalance them, we can have no excuse for omitting; and we are called to no pains for the improvement of our reason, but such as cannot be declined without lessening our happiness—without incurring some evil we should otherwise have escaped, or wanting some good we should otherwise have obtained: whatever has its neglect attended with these consequences, must be expected from us.

2. That they are to seek knowledge who are to get their bread, might seem a harsh lesson, if the endeavour to inform, hindered that to maintain themselves; if the *knowledge* they were to seek was any other but *of what is best for them*, of what can give them all the happiness that creatures so constituted can receive. For *this* every one must have leisure;† it should be judged our chief business; it directs us to that very employment from which we have our support—is carried on with it—assists us in it—gives it every consideration that can make it easy and satisfactory to us. The peasant or mechanic is not advised to spend fewer hours at labour, that he may have more for study, for reading and contemplating—to leave his spade or his tools for a pen

that our proper employment lies in those enquiries, and in that sort of knowledge which is most suited to our natural capacities, and carries in it our greatest interest, the condition of our eternal state. Hence, I think, I may conclude, that morality is the proper science and business of mankind in general. *Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding.*

* How men, whose plentiful fortunes allow them leisure to improve their understandings, can satisfy themselves with a lazy ignorance, I cannot tell; but methinks they have a low opinion of their souls, who lay out all their incomes in provision for the body, and employ none of it to procure the means and helps of knowledge; who take great care to appear always in a neat and splendid outside, and would think themselves miserable in coarse clothes, or a patched coat, and yet contentedly suffer their minds to appear abroad in a pie-bald livery of coarse patches, and borrowed shreds, such as it has pleased chance or their country taylor (I mean the common opinion of those they have conversed with) to clothe them in. I will not here mention how unreasonable this is for men that ever think of a future state, and their concernment in it, which no rational man can avoid to do sometimes. *Locke's Essay on Human Understanding, B. iv. Ch. 20.*

† Are the greatest part of mankind, by the necessity of their condition, subjected to unavoidable ignorance in those things which are of greatest importance to them? Have the bulk of mankind no other guide but accident and blind chance, to conduct them to their happiness or misery?—God has furnished men with faculties sufficient to direct them in the way they should take, if they will but seriously employ them that way, when their ordinary vocations allow them the leisure. No man is so wholly taken up with the attendance on the means of living, as to have no spare time to think at all of his soul, and inform himself in matters of Religion. Were men as intent on this, as they are on things of lower concernment, there are none so enslaved to the necessities of life, who might not find many vacancies that might be husbanded to this advantage of their knowledge. *Locke's Essay on Human Understanding.*

or a book. No, the advice to him is, observe what passes, and what good or hurt accompanies or follows it.

Remark what it is that pleases you only for a few moments, and then either brings immediate uneasiness, or lays a foundation for some future.

You find several things of service to you, observe which is of most, which has no sort of inconvenience attending it, or very little in comparison of its advantage; and, if there are none of them without some inconveniences, which has the fewest—which does you good in a higher degree, or for a longer term.

You are continually with those of the same nature with yourself; take notice what is serviceable or prejudicial to them; you may learn from their experience what your own teaches you not. Every day will furnish some or other occurrence that may be a profitable lesson to you, make it such; overlook nothing that affects your well-being; attend chiefly to what concerns it.

Go over frequently in your thoughts the observations you have made on what will more or less benefit you; let them be so deeply imprinted upon your mind, make them so familiar to yourself, that the offer of a less good may never surprize and betray you into the neglect, and, by that means, the loss of a greater.

You are at all times at liberty to consider your own nature, be acquainted with it, see what you can do for yourself, what share of your happiness has no dependance on the things without you; what blessings may be secured to you by your own dispositions.

You necessarily shun evil: don't mistake it; be sure of what is so; be apprised of the degrees of it; be thoroughly instructed in these, that a desire to escape what you could easily bear, may never occasion you a distress which you would pronounce insupportable. Endeavour to inform yourself what evil you cannot too industriously avoid—what you should readily submit to—what you may change into good.

He, to whose situation terms like these would be unsuitable, must have *reason* to seek, as well as a *livelibood*. Our natural understanding fits all of us for a task like this; nor can it be inconsistent with any the hardest labour to which our support will oblige us.

The whole of this so severe a lesson is this brief one; Do your best for yourself; be as happy as the right use of the abilities God has given you can make you.

3. As for the unconcernedness of so great a part of our species at their ignorance and errors—the entire satisfaction they express under them; with regard to this, let it be considered, that we are no more to judge of good from the practice of numbers, than of truth from their opinions.

They thoroughly enjoy themselves, you say, with their little knowledge, and many mistakes.

And are any of us in our younger years better pleased than when we are suffered to sport away our time—to pass it without the least controul and instruction? But because we are thus pleased, are we rightly so? Could worse befall us, than to be permitted to continue thus agreeably unrestrained and uninstructed?

The man in a lethargy desires you would let him dose on; he apprehends no danger, when you see the greatest: you grieve and vex him, when you attempt to cure him.

Does any one who has more sense than the bulk of his fellow-creatures, wish for their dulness, that he might share their diversions—with for their thoughtlessness, that he might join in their mirth?

Could the neglect of our rational faculties be accompanied, throughout our continuance in being, with the satisfaction at present expressed by so many under it, this indeed might be something in its favour; but this is by no means the case. He who gave us these faculties, and the ability to improve them, must intend that we should improve them: by frustrating his intention, we incur his displeasure; if we incur it, we may justly expect, sooner or later, to feel the effects thereof.

Nor is it to be thought that the neglect of our reason is, from the good we hereby forego, its own sufficient punishment, and therefore not likely to expose us to any other. We cannot rightly think thus, because of the extensive mischief occasioned by this neglect. It is very far from terminating in ourselves, from making us the only sufferers. Were it so confined, some pretence there might be for considering our mere crime as our ample punishment. But such it cannot appear, when it does infinite hurt to others—to our neighbourhood—to our friends—to our family—to the whole community of which we are members.

What is enough for myself, what I can do without, should be the least of my concern. My duty is to reflect what I can do for others; how I may make myself of greatest use. We stand all largely indebted to

to our fellow-creatures; and, owing them so much, if we neglect to qualify ourselves for serving them, we greatly injure them. But as this is not the place for pursuing these reflections, I will now only remark, of what deplorable consequence it is to our children (whose title to our endeavours for their benefit, all acknowledge) that the culture of our minds is so little our care—that we slight the rational improvements, with a capacity for which our Creator has so graciously favoured us,

Unapprehensive of the mischief our offspring must necessarily receive from our sloth, our intemperance, and other criminal gratifications, we impair their frame before it is yet completed; we entail on them misery, before we give them life.

Their reason seems to be watched in its appearance, only that it may be applied to for its speedier corruption. Every thing they are at first taught to value, is what they cannot enough despise; and all the pains that should be taken to keep their minds from vain fears, are employed to introduce them.

The chief of what our memory receives in our childhood, is what our maturer age most wishes to forget.

While we are ignorant how hurtful it is to be governed by our passions, our wise directors permit them to govern us, and thereby give them a strength which we afterwards fruitlessly lament and oppose. To save our tears, we are to have our will; and, for a few moments of present quiet, be condemned to years of distress. Imaginary evils we are bid to regard as the principal real ones; and what we should most avoid, we are, by examples of greatest weight with us, encouraged to practise.

How much indeed both the bodies and minds of children suffer from the ill-informed understanding of their parents, is scarcely to be conceived—what advantages they lose by it—what misery they feel; and therefore, as they are the immediate objects of our care—as nature has made them such, and all the prejudice they receive from any failure of ours, from any neglect on our part in qualifying ourselves to assist them in the way we ought to do it, is really an injury done them by us; we cannot think, that if we won't endeavour to have just notions of things, we are sufficiently punished by being without them—we can, with no probability, suppose, that, if we are content to be losers ourselves, it will be satisfaction enough for any distress

that our carelessness or supineness brings on others, even on them whose welfare we ought most to consult.

Of what advantage it is to both sexes that *the parent*, under whose guidance they are in their tender years, should not have confined her thoughts to the recommendations of apparel, furniture, equipage—to the amusements in fashion—to the forms of good breeding—to the low topics of female conversation; we have the most remarkable instances in the family of *Emilia*. She has for many years been the wife of one, whose rank is the least part of his merit: made by him the mother of a numerous offspring, and having from his important and uninterrupted avocations, their education left entirely to her, 'till they were qualified for a more extensive instruction; it was her study how she might be of the greatest use to them: they were ever under her eye: her attention to forming their manners could be diverted by none of the pleasures, by none of the engagements that claim so many of the hours of a woman of quality. She did not awe, but reason her children into their duty; they shewed themselves to practise it not from constraint, but conviction. When they were absent from her—when they were in company, where they might have been as free as they pleased, I have, with astonishment, observed them as much influenced by what their wise mother had advised, as they could have been by any thing she would have said had she been then present. In her conversation with them she was perpetually inculcating useful truths; she talked them into more knowledge, by the time that they were six or seven years old, than is usually attained at, perhaps, twice that age.

Let me indulge my imagination, and, by its aid, give a sample of her instructions; first to one of the females of her family, and then, to one of the males. *Leonora*, her eldest daughter, has, among her many accomplishments, great skill in painting. When her mother and she stood viewing the pictures, that crowded each side of the room in which they were, *Emilia* desired to hear what the pupil of so eminent a master had to observe on the works before them. *Leonora* began; praised the bold and animated manner in this piece, the softness and delicacy of that. Nothing could be more graceful than the attitude of this figure; the expression in that was so

happy

happy, the colouring so beautiful, that one might truly say of it, to make it alive, speech alone is wanted; nor would you think even that wanting, were you to trust wholly to your eyes. Here she admired the skillful distribution of light and shade; there the perspective was so wonderfully exact, that in the great number of objects presented to the eye, it could fix on none but what had its proper place, and just dimensions. How free is that drapery? what a variety is there in it, yet how well adjusted is the whole to the several figures in the piece? Does not that group extremely please your ladyship? the disposition is quite fine, the association of the figures admirable; I know not which you could pitch upon to have absent or altered. *Leonora* pursuing this strain, *Emilia* interrupted her: Have we nothing, child, but exactness here? Is every thing before us quite finished and faultless? You will be pleased, Madam, to reflect on what you have so often inculcated, That one would always chuse to be sparing in censure, and liberal of praise—That commendation, freely bestowed on what deserves it, credits alike our temper and our understanding.

This I would have you never forget. But I'm here a learner; in that light you are now to consider me; and as your French master taught you pronunciation, not only by using a right, but by imitating your wrong one; making you by that means more sensible where the difference lay; so to qualify me for a judge in painting, it will not suffice to tell me where the artist has succeeded, if you observe not, likewise, where he has miscarried.

Leonora then proceeded to shew where the drawing was incorrect—the attitude ungraceful—the *costume* ill presumed—the ordonnance irregular—the contours harsh—the light too strong—the shade too deep; extending her remarks in this way to a great number of pieces in the collection. You have been thus far, interposed *Emilia*, my instructor, let me now be yours. Suppose your own portrait here. In the same manner that you would examine it, judge of the original. This you ought to do, since it will be done by others; and the more blemishes you discover, the fewer you will probably leave for them to reproach you with. The faults in the picture may be known to him who drew it, and yet be suffered to appear, from his inability to correct them; but when you discern what is faulty in yourself, if you cannot amend,

you can, often, conceal it. Here you have the advantage of the painter; in another respect he has it greatly of you. Not one in a thousand is a judge of the *failures* in his performance; and therefore even when many may be objected to him, he shall pass, in common esteem, for an excellent artist. But let the woman, unconscious of her imperfections, be at no pains to remedy or hide them, all who converse with her are judges of them; when she permits them to be seen, they are certain to be censured.

You have sufficiently convinced me, to how many things the painter must attend—against what various mistakes he has to guard: each of your criticisms on him may be a lesson to yourself; every blemish or beauty in any part of his works has something correspondent to it in human life.

The design is faulty, not only when the end we propose to ourselves is confessedly criminal, but when it is low and mean; when, likewise, we let our time pass at random without any concern for what reason and duty require, but as caprice, or humour, or passion suggests.

We offend against proportion, when we arrogate to ourselves the desert we want, or over-rate what may be allowed us—when we hate not what is really evil; or when our affections are placed on what is not our proper good. You remember the dissection of a female heart in the *Spectator*; I refer you to it, that I may spare my own reflections, on what would furnish copious matter for no very pleasing ones.

Your ladyship will pardon me for interrupting you; but I can't help thinking, that the head and heart of a beau or country squire would furnish as much folly and corruption, as the head and heart of any woman in the kingdom.

We shall never, child, become better, by thinking who are worse than ourselves. If the charge upon us be just, we should consider how to get clear of it, and not who are liable to one equally reproachful. Were I to bid you wash your face, would you think yourself justified in not doing it, because you could shew me a woman of rank with a dirtier? But to the purpose.

That expression, any failure in which you would, as a judge of painting, treat without mercy, is, in morals, violated by whatever is out of character. All inconsistency in practice—in profession and practice; every thing unbecoming your sex—

your

your education—your capacity—your station, deserves the same censure that the pencil meets with, when it errs in expression.

Skill in the distribution of light and shade, or the *clair-obscur*, as, I think, the term of art is, I should apprehend resembled by prudence; which teaches us to shew ourselves in the most advantageous point of view—brings forward and brightens our good qualities, but throws back and obscures our defects—suffers nothing to distinguish itself that will be to our disparagement, nor shades any thing that will credit us.

By *ordonnance* is meant I apprehend, the manner of placing the several objects in a piece, or the disposition of them with respect to the whole composition. And what can be fitter for us, than to consider where we are, and to appear accordingly? The civilities that are less decently shewn in the church, it would be a great indecorum to neglect in the drawing-room. The freedom that will gain you the hearts of your inferiors, shall, if used towards those of a higher rank, make you be thought the worst-bred woman in the world. Let the season for it be disregarded, your cheerfulness shall be offensive, your gravity seem ridiculous—your wit bring your sense into question, and your very friendliest interposition be thought not so much a proof of your affection as of your impertinence. 'Tis the right placing of things that shews our discretion—that keeps us clear of difficulties—that raises our credit—that principally contributes to give any of our designs success.

To beauty in colouring corresponds, perhaps, good nature improved by good breeding. And, certainly, as the canvass could furnish no design so well fancied, no draught so correct, but what would yet fail to please, and would even disgust you, were the colours of it ill-united—not sustained by each other—void of their due harmony; so both sense and virtue go but a little way in our recommendation, if they appear not to their proper advantage in an easiness of behaviour—in soft and gentle manners, and with all the graces of affability, courtesy and complaisance. I see, by your smiling, you are satisfied you cannot be accused of being a bad colourist. Believe me, you have then gained a very material point; and the more concerns you have in the world, the more proofs you will find of its importance. I'll drop this subject when

I have said to you, That if to make a good picture is such a complicated task, requires so much attention, such extensive observation—if an error in any of the principal parts of painting so offends, takes off so greatly from the merit of the piece—if he, who is truly an artist, overlooks nothing that would be at all a blemish to his performance, and would call each trivial indecorum a fault, think, child, what care about the original ought to equal this for the portrait—of what infinitely greater consequence it must be, to have every thing right within ourselves, than to give a just appearance to the things without us; and how much less pardonably any violation of decorum would be charged on your life, than on your pencil.

The most finished representation only pleases by its correspondence to what it represents, as nature well imitated; and if justness in mere representation and imitation can have the charms you find in it, you may easily conceive the still greater delight that must arise from beholding the beauties of nature itself; such, particularly, as the pencil cannot imitate—the beauties of rational nature, those which the possessor gives herself—which are of ten thousand times the moment of any in her outward symmetry—which, how highly soever they may adorn her, profit her still more; and are not only to her own advantage, but to that of the age in which she lives, and possibly, of remotest generations.

My concern to see you this fair unblemished original makes me strangely unmindful on what topic I am got. There, surely, can be no proof wanting, how much a wise and good woman excels any portrait or any woman, who has but the merit of a portrait, a fine appearance.

In this way *Emilia* takes each opportunity to form the manners of her daughter—to give her throughout just and reasonable sentiments, and dispose her to the exact discharge of her duty in every relation.

Leonora, thus educated, has the foibles and the follies of the age in their due contempt—judges wisely—acts prudently—is ever usefully or innocently employed—can pass her evenings very cheerfully without a card in her hand—can be perfectly in humour when she is at home, and all her acquaintance at the assembly; and seems likely to borrow no credit from her family, which she will not fully repay.

We will dismiss the daughter, and represent *Emilia* parting with her son in

terms

terms like these. I am now to take my leave of you, for one campaign at least. It is the first you ever served; let me advise, and do you act, as if it would be your last: the dangers, to which you will be exposed, give both of us reason to fear it: if it please God that it should be so, may you not be found unprepared, nor I unreluctant! This I am the less likely to be, when you have had my best counsel, and I your promise to reflect upon it. He bowing, and assuring her, that whatever she should be pleased to say to him, it would be carefully remembered; she proceeded—I could never conceive, what induced the soldier to think that he might take greater liberties than the rest of mankind. He is, 'tis true, occasionally subjected to greater hardships, and he runs greater hazards; but by a lewd and vicious life, he makes these hardships abundantly more grievous than they otherwise would be—he disqualifies himself to bear them. What would you think of his wits, who, because he is to be much in the cold, sits, as often as he can, close to the fire? An habitual sobriety and regularity of manners is, certainly, the best preservative of that vigorous constitution, which makes it least uneasy to endure fatigue and cold, hunger and thirst.

The dangers to which the soldier is exposed, are so far from excusing his licentiousness, when he has no enemy near him, that they ought to be considered as the strongest motive to conform himself, at all times, to the rules of reason and religion. A practice agreeable to them is the best support of his spirits, and the surest provision for his safety—It will effectually remove his fears, and can alone encourage his hopes: nothing but it can give him any comfortable expectation, if what threatens him should befall him. He who is so much in danger, ought to be properly armed against it, and this he can never be by reflecting on the women he has corrupted—on his hours of intemperance, or on any other of his extravagancies. You won't, perhaps, allow that he wants the *armour* I would provide him, because he never knows the apprehensions that require it. But I am considering what his apprehensions ought to be, not what they are. The nature of things will not be altered by our opinion about them.

It is granted, that a soldier's life is, frequently, in the utmost hazard; and the question is not, how a thoughtless, stupid, absurd creature should behave in such a

situation; but, what should be done in it by a man of prudence and sense? I say, he will attend to the value of what he *hazards*—to the consequence of its loss; and, if found of very great, he will so act, that the loss thereof may be, if possible, some or other way made up to him, or accompanied with the fewest inconveniencies. Insensibility of danger is the merit of a bulldog. True courage sees danger, but despises it only from rational motives—from the considerations of duty. There can be no virtue in exposing life, where there is no notion of its value; you are a brave man, when you fully understand its worth, and yet in a good cause disregard death.

If, thus to be ready to die is commendable, wholly from the cause that makes us so, which is, unquestionably, the case; I don't see how such an indifference to life, when honour calls you to risk it, can consist with passing, at any season, immorally and dissolutely.

Here is a gallant officer who will rather be killed than quit his post—than be wanting in the defence of his country! Is not this a fine resolution in one who, by his excesses, makes himself every day less able to serve his country; or who sets an example, which, if followed, would do his country as much mischief as it could have to fear from its most determined enemy?

The inconsiderate and thoughtless may laugh at vice—may give soft terms to very bad actions, or speak of them, as if they were rather matter of jest than abhorrence: but whoever will reflect whence all the misery of mankind arises—what the source is of all the evils we lament; he cannot but own, that if any thing ought to make us serious—if we ought to detest any thing, it should be *that*, from which such terrible effects are derived.

For the very same reason that we prefer health to sickness—ease to pain, we must prefer virtue to vice. Moral evil seems to me to have a necessary connection with natural. According to my notion of things, there is no crime but what creates pain, or has a tendency to create it to others or ourselves: every criminal is such, by doing something that is directly, or in its consequences, hurtful to himself, or to a fellow-creature.

Is not here a foundation of religion that no objections can affect? Deprive us of it, you deprive us of the only effectual restraint from those practices, which are most detrimental to the world—you deprive us

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of virtue, and thereby of all the true happiness we have here to expect.

To charge religion with the mischief occasioned by mistakes about it, I think full as impertinent, as to decry reason for the wrong use that has been made of it; or government, for the bad administration of every kind of it, in every part of the world. What shall prove to the advantage of mankind, will, in all cases, depend upon themselves: that which is, confessedly, most for it, in every instance you can think of, you see, occasionally, abused; and by that abuse becoming as hurtful, as it would, otherwise, have been beneficial. Contrary I hate; and to read books of it as ill suits my leisure as my inclination: yet I do not profess a religion, the grounds of which I have never considered. And upon the very same grounds that I am convinced of the truth of religion in general, I am so of the truth of christianity. The good of the world is greatly promoted by it. If we would take christianity for our guide throughout, we could not have a better—we could not have a surer to all the happiness of which our present state admits. Its simplicity may have been disguised—its intention perverted—its doctrines misrepresented, and conclusions drawn, suiting rather the interest or ambition of the expositor, than the directions of the text: but when I resort to the rule itself;—when I find it asserting, that the whole of my duty is to love God above all things, and my neighbour as myself—to live always mindful by whom I am sent into, and preserved in, the world, and always disposed to do in it the utmost good in my power; I can no more doubt, whether this is the voice of my Creator, than I can doubt, whether it must be his will, that, when he has made me a reasonable creature, I should act like one. But I will drop a topic, on which I am sure your father must have sufficiently enlarged: I can only speak to it more generally: *difficulties* and *objections* I must leave him to obviate; yet thus much confidently affirming, that if you won't adopt an irreligious scheme, till you find one clear of them, you will continue as good a christian, as it has been our joint care to make you. I pray God you may do so. He that would corrupt your principles, is the enemy you have most to fear; an enemy who means you worse, than any you will draw your sword against.

When you are told, that the soldier's religion is his honour, observe the practice of

them from whom you hear it; you'll soon then have proof enough, they mean little more by honour, than what is requisite to keep or advance their commissions—that they are still in their own opinion men of nice honour, though abandoned to the grossest sensuality and excess—though chargeable with acts of the foulest perfidy and injustice—that the honour by which they govern themselves differs as widely from what is truly such, as humour from reason. True humour is to virtue what good breeding is to good nature, the polishing, the refinement of it. And the more you think of christianity, the more firmly you will be persuaded, that in its precepts the strictest rules of honour are contained. By these I, certainly, would have you always guided, and, on that very account, have reminded you of the religion, which not only shews you them, but proposes the reward likeliest to attach you to them. I have done. Take care of yourself. You won't fly danger, don't court it. If the one would bring your courage into question, the other will your sense. The rash is as ill qualified for command, as the coward. May every blessing attend you! And to secure your happiness, live always attentive to your duty; reverence and obey Him to whom you owe your being, and from whom must come whatever good you can hope for in it. Adieu. I can't say it would sufficiently comfort me for your loss, that you died with honour; but it would infinitely less afflict me to hear of you among the dead, than among the prosfligate.

What has been the issue of instructions like these from both parents? *Scipio*, for so we will call the worthy man, from the time he received his commission, has alike distinguished himself by his courage and conduct. The greatest dangers have not terrified, the worst examples have not corrupted him. He has approved himself disdaining by cowardice to keep *life*, and abhorring to shorten it by excess: the bravery with which he has hazarded it, is equalled by the prudence with which he passes it.

§ 149. On the Employment of Time.

ESSAY THE SECOND.

Cum animus, cognitio perceptisque virtutibus, à corporis obsequio, indulgentiæque discesserit, voluptatemque, sicut labem aliquam decore oppresserit, omnemque mortis dolorisque timeram effugerit, societatemque caritatis coierit

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eam sub, omnesque naturâ conjunctos, suos duxerit, cultumque decorum, & puram religionem suscepit—quid eo, dici aut excogitari poterit beatius? *Tull. de Legibus.*

Among the *Indians* there is an excellent set of men, called *Gymnosophists*: these I greatly admire, not as skilled in propagating the vine—in the arts of grafting or agriculture. They apply not themselves to till the ground—to search after gold—to break the horse—to tame the bull—to shear or feed sheep or goats. What is it then that engages them? One thing preferable to all these. Wisdom is the pursuit as well of the old men, the teachers, as of the young, their disciples. Nor is there any thing among them that I so much praise, as their aversion to sloth and idleness.

When the tables are spread, before the meat is set on them, all the youth, assembling to their meal, are asked by their masters—In what useful task they have been employed from sun-rising to that time.—One represents himself as having been chosen an arbitrator, and succeeded by his prudent management in composing a difference—in making them friends who were at variance. A second had been paying obedience to his parents commands. A third had made some discovery by his own application, or learned something by another's instruction. The rest give an account of themselves in the same way.

He who has done nothing to deserve a dinner, is turned out of doors without one.

Dipping into *Apulius* for my afternoon's amusement, the foregoing passage was the last I read, before I fell into a slumber, which exhibited to me a vast concourse of the fashionable people at the court-end of the town, under the examination of a *Gymnosophist*, how they had passed their morning. He begun with the men.

Many of them acknowledged, that the morning, properly speaking, was near gone, before their eyes were opened.

Many of them had only risen to dress—to visit—to amuse themselves at the drawing-room or coffee-house.

Some had by riding or walking been consulting that health at the beginning of the day, which the close of it would wholly pass in impairing.

Some from the time they had got on their own cloaths, had been engaged in seeing others put on theirs—in attending levees—in endeavouring to procure,

by their importunity, what they had disqualified themselves for by their idleness.

Some had been early out of their beds, but it was because they could not, from their ill-luck the preceding evening, rest in them; and when risen, as they had no spirits, they could not reconcile themselves to any sort of application.

Some had not had it in their power to do what was of much consequence; in the former part of the morning, they wanted to speak with their tradesmen; and in the latter, they could not be denied to their friends.

Others, truly, had been reading, but reading what could make them neither wiser nor better, what was not worth their remembering, or what they should wish to forget.

It grieved me to hear so many of eminent rank, both in the sea and land service, giving an account of themselves that levelled them with the meanest under their command.

Several appeared with an air expressing the fullest confidence that what they had to say for themselves would be to the philosopher's entire satisfaction. They had been employed as *Virtuosi* should be—had been exercising their skill in the liberal arts, and encouraging the artists. Medals, pictures, statues had undergone their examination, and been their purchase. They had been inquiring what the literati of *France, Germany, Italy*, had of late published; and they had bought what suited their respective tastes.

When it appeared, that the completing a *Roman* series had been their concern, who had never read over, in their own language, a *Latin* historian—that they who grudged no expence for originals, knew them only by hearsay from their worst copies—that the very persons who had paid so much for the labour of *Rybrack*, upon *Sir Andrew's* judgment, would, if they had followed their own, have paid the same sum for that of *Bird's*—That the book-buyers had not laid out their money on what they ever proposed to read, but on what they had heard commended, and what they wanted to fit a shelf, and fill a library that only served them for a breakfast-room; this class of men the Sage pronounced the idlest of all idle people, and doubly blameable, as wasting alike their time and their fortune.

The follies of one sex had so tired the

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philosopher, that he would suffer no account to be given him of those of the other. It was easy for him to guess how the females must have been employed, where such were the examples in those they were to *honour and obey*.

For a short space there was a general silence. The Gymnosophist at length expressed himself to this effect: You have been represented to me as a people who would use your own reason—who would think for yourselves—who would freely inquire, form your opinions on evidence, and adopt no man's sentiments merely because they were his. A character, to which, for aught I can find, you are as ill entitled as, perhaps, most nations in the universe. The freedom with which great names are opposed, and received opinions questioned by *some* among you, is, probably, no other than what is used by *some* of every country in which liberal inquiries are pursued. The difference is, you safely publish your sentiments on every subject; to *them* it would be penal to avow any notions that agree not with those of their superiors. But when you thus pass your days, as if you thought not at all, have you any pretence to freedom of thought? Can they be said to love truth, who shun consideration? When it seems your study to be useless, to be of no service to others or yourselves—when you treat your time as a burthen, to be eased of which is your whole concern—when that situation, those circumstances of life are accounted the happiest, which must tempt you to be idle and insignificant; human nature is as much dishonoured by you, as it is by any of those people, whose savageness or superstition you have in the greatest contempt.

Let me not be told, how well you approve your reason by your arguments or your sentiments. The proper use of reason, is to act reasonably. When you so grossly fail in this, all the just apprehensions you may entertain, all the right things you may say, only prove with what abilities you are formed, and with what guilt you misapply them.

The Sage here raising his arm with his voice, I concluded it advisable not to stand quite so near him. In attempting to remove I awoke, and hastened to commit to writing a dream that had so much truth in it, and therefore expressed how reasonable it will be to consider to what use of our time we are directed.

First, by our present state and condition;

Secondly, By the relation we bear to each other;

Thirdly, By that in which we stand towards the Deity.

If we are raised above the brutes—if we are undeniably of a more excellent kind, we must be made for a different purpose; we cannot have the faculties they want, but in order to a life different from theirs; and when our life is not such—when it is but a round of eating, drinking, and sleeping, as theirs is—when, by our idleness and inattention, we are almost on a level with them, both as to all sense of duty, and all useful knowledge that we possess, our time must have been grievously misemployed; there is no surer token of its having been so, than that we have done so little to advance ourselves above the herd, when our Creator had vouchsafed us so far superior a capacity.

The creatures below us are wholly intent on the pleasures of sense, because they are capable of no other: but as man is capable of much higher and nobler, he must have this privilege, that his pursuits may be accordingly—that his better nature should be better employed.

Were we born only to satisfy the appetites we have in common with the brute kind, we should, like it, have no higher principle to direct us—to furnish us with other delights. All the distinction between us that this principle *can* make, was, undoubtedly, intended by our Creator to be made; and the less any appears, our abuse of this principle, and consequently our opposition to our Maker's will, is the more notorious and blameable.

It may seem then plain, that there are advantages to be pursued, and a certain degree of excellence to be attained by us, according to the powers that we have, and the creatures below us want. How industrious we should be to improve each opportunity for this, we may learn by attending, in the next place, to our *uncertain*, and, at all events, *short* continuance on earth.

We are fully apprised, that by the pains of a few hours or days no progress can be made in any thing, that has the slightest pretence to commendation. Those accomplishments, that are confined to our *single* ends, what months, what years of application do they cost us! And, alas! what trifles are the most admired of them,

in comparison of a great number of others for which we are qualified; and which, as they are so infinitely preferable to these, ought to be so much the more earnestly sought! When, therefore, the whole term allowed for gaining and using them, is thus precarious and short, we can have but a very small portion of it to dispose of as we please—to pass entirely as mere fancy or humour suggests. If much is to be done in a very short time, the good husbandry of it must be consulted: and there is no one, who considers what we, universally, may effect—in how many particulars we may be of service to ourselves—how much depends upon our endeavours—how necessary they are for our attaining what should be most valued by us, what is of greatest consequence to us; there is, I say, no one, who considers these things, but must admit, that we have much to do, and therefore, that the scanty term we have for it ought to be carefully managed—can only by a prudent management suffice for the dispatch of such a task.

And our opportunities, for making attainments thus desirable, should be so much the more diligently watched and readily embraced, as they meet with many unavoidable interruptions even in our short life.

How great a part of our time is necessarily lost to us—is consumed by, that shorter death, our sleep! We are really better economists than ordinary in this instance, if only a third part of our life thus passes: and on the rest of it what a large demand is made by our meals—by our justifiable recreations—by the forms and civilities, to which a proper correspondence with our fellow creatures obliges us? Add to these necessary deductions, the many casual ones with which we all, unavoidably, meet, and it will soon appear, what an exceeding small part of our short continuance on earth, we have to bestow on such purposes of living, as alone can be of credit to us.

We are further to reflect, that in the small part of our life, in which we can be employed like reasonable creatures, opportunities, for doing what may be of greatest moment, do not always serve us: and with some of them, if lost we never again meet.

We depend very much on things without us, and over which we have no sort of command. There may be an extraordinary advantage derived to us from them; but, if the first offer of this be neglected, we may never have a second.

Nor is it only the dependance we have on things without us, that requires us to carefully to watch our opportunities; we have a still more awakening call, if possible, to this from within ourselves—from the restraints to which the exercise of our powers is subjected. We cannot use these when and as we please—we cannot chuse the time of life wherein to avail ourselves of our natural endowments, and to reap all the advantage designed us in them.

When we are in our youth, our bodies easily receive whatever mein or motion can recommend us: where is the sound so difficult, which our tongue cannot be then taught to express? To what speed may our feet then be brought, and our hands to what dexterity? But if we are advanced to manhood before the forming us in any of these ways is attempted, all endeavour after it will then either be quite fruitless, or, probably, less successful than it would have been in our earlier years; and whatever its success be, a much greater might have formerly been obtained with half the pains.

The very same is it with our understanding, with our will and our passions. There is a certain season when our minds may be enlarged—when a vast stock of useful truths may be acquired—when our passions will readily submit to the government of reason—when right principles may be so fixed in us, as to influence every important action of our future lives: but the season for this extends neither to the whole; nor to any considerable length of our continuance upon earth; it is limited to a few years of our term; and, if throughout these we neglect it, error or ignorance are, according to the ordinary course of things, entailed upon us. Our will becomes our law—our lusts gain a strength that we afterwards vainly oppose—wrong inclinations become so confirmed in us, that they defeat all our endeavours to correct them.

II. Let me proceed to consider what directions are furnished us for the employment of our time, by the relation we bear to each other.

Society is manifestly upheld by a circulation of kindness: we are all of us, in some way or other, wanting assistance, and in like manner, qualified to give it. None are in a state of independency on their fellow-creatures. The most slenderly endowed are not a mere burden on their kind; even they can contribute their share to the

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common good, and may be to the political body, what those parts of us, in which we least pride ourselves, are to the natural, not greatly indeed its ornaments, but much for its real use.

We learn what are justly our natural claims, from this mutual dependency: that on its account, as well as for other reasons, our life is not to pass in a round of pleasure or idleness, or according to the suggestions of mere humour and fancy, or in sordid or selfish pursuits.

There can be nothing more evidently my duty than that I should return the kindness I receive—than that, if many are employed in promoting my interest, I should be as intent on furthering theirs.

All men are by nature equal. Their common passions and affections, their common infirmities, their common wants give such constant remembrances of this equality, even to them who are most disposed to forget it, that they cannot, with all their endeavours, render themselves wholly unmindful thereof—they cannot become *insensible*, how unwilling soever they may be to *consider*, that their debt is as large as their demands—that they owe to others, as much as they can reasonably expect from them.

But are all then upon a level—must those distinctions be thrown down, which, being the chief support of the order and peace of society, are such of its happiness; and which nature herself may be judged to appoint, by the very dispositions and abilities with which she forms us; qualifying some for rule, and fitting some for subjection?

That, in many instances, we are all upon a level, none can deny, who regard the materials of our bodies—the diseases and pain to which we are subject—our entrance into the world, the means of preserving us in it—the length of our continuance therein—our passage out of it. But then as it will not follow, that, because we are made of the same materials—are liable to the same accidents and end, we, therefore, are the same throughout; neither is it a just conclusion, that, because we are levelled in our dependence, we should be so in our employments.

Superiority will remain—distinctions will be preserved, though all of us must serve each other, while that service is differently performed.

Superiority has no sort of connexion with idleness and uselessness: it may exempt us from the bodily fatigue of our in-

feriors, from their confinement and hardships—it may entitle some to the deference and submission of those about them; but it by no means exempts any of us from all attention to the common good, from all endeavours to promote it—by no means does it entitle any of us to live, like so many drones, on the industry of others, to reap all the benefit we can from them, and be of none to them.

The distinctions of prince and subject—noble and vulgar—rich and poor, consist not in this, that the one has a great deal to do, and the other nothing—that the one must be always busied, and the other may be always taking his pleasure, or enjoying his ease. No, in this they consist, that these several persons are differently *busied*—assist each other in different ways.

The sovereign acquaints himself with the true state of his kingdom—directs the execution of its laws—provides for the exact administration of justice—secures the properties of his people—preserves their peace. These are his cares; and that they may be the more assured of success, and have their weight more easily supported, his commands find the readiest obedience—a large revenue is assigned him—the highest honours are paid him. It is not, in any of these instances, the man who is regarded, but the head of the community; and that for the benefit of the community—for the security of its quiet, and the furtherance of its prosperity.

The nobility have it their task, to qualify themselves for executing the more honourable and important offices of the commonwealth, and to execute these offices with diligence and fidelity. The very station, to which they are advanced, is supposed either the recompence of great service done the public, or of the merit of an uncommon capacity to serve it.

The richer members of the state, as they have all the helps that education can give them—as in their riper age they have all the opportunity they can wish for to improve upon these helps—as their circumstances exempt them from the temptations, to which poverty is exposed; to them is committed the discharge of those offices in the commonwealth, which are next to the highest, and sometimes even of these—they either concur in making laws for the society, or are chiefly concerned in executing them—commerce, arts, science, liberty, virtue, whatever can be for the credit and peace—for the ease and prosperity of a na-

tion, depends on the part they act—on their conduct.

Let them be a supine, indolent race, averse to rational inquiries—to all serious application—let it be their business to divert themselves, to give a loose to fancy and appetite—let all their schemes be those of self-indulgence, and their life a round of vanity and sensuality; sad must be the condition of the nation to which they belong! throughout it must be disorder and confusion—it must have the worst to fear from its more powerful neighbours.

And as, in all countries, *they* who are distinguished by *their* rank or fortune, have *their* post, *their* duty, *their* task for the common good—as to discharge this requires many accomplishments, the attainment of which is, matter of much attention and pains, requires an improved understanding, command of passions, an integrity and resolution, which only can be preserved by an habitual seriousness and reflection—as *they* cannot fail in *their* parts, cannot misemploy *their* leisure, and unfit themselves for, or be negligent in the service appointed *them*, but *their* country must suffer grievously in its most valuable interests; the diligence *they* should use, the little time *they* have to trifle away is evident: it is most evident under what obligations *they* are, not to abandon themselves to merely animal gratifications, and the pleasures of sense—to sloth and inactivity.

Nor is it only from the omission of what *they* ought to perform, that the public will in this case suffer, but from the example *they* set. An insensibility that they are to live to any useful purposes—a thoughtlessness of their having any thing to mind but their humour and liking—a gross carelessness how their days pass, cannot appear amongst those of higher rank, but the infection will spread itself among those of a lower; these will desire to be as lazy and worthless as their superiors—to have the same share of mirth and jollity—to be of as little consequence to the public.

That this will be the case, is as certain, as experience can make any thing. It has been, and is, every where, found, that where they, who have the wealth, and are therefore supposed, though very unreasonably, to have the sense of a nation, treat their time as of no account, only think of making it subservient to their excesses, their vanity, or their sports; the same wrong notions soon spread among their inferiors.

The populace, indeed, cannot be quite so dissolute—they cannot be so immersed in sloth and sensuality, as the richer part of a nation, because their circumstances permit it not: their maintenance must cost them some care and pains, but they will take as little as they can—they will, as far as is in their power, have their fill of what their betters teach them to be the comforts of life, the enjoyments proper for reasonable creatures—they cannot debase themselves in the more elegant and expensive ways, but they will in those which suit their education and condition—they cannot be wholly useless, but if they make themselves of any service, it shall only be, because they are paid for it, because they cannot be supported without it.

And how can we exact that things should be otherwise? It is not, upon the lowest computation, one in a hundred who forms his manners upon the principles of reason. Example, customary practice govern us. And, as they, who are more especially dependent upon others, have it taught them, from their very infancy, to respect those on whom they depend—to observe them—to be directed by them; no wonder that they should be fond of imitating them, as far as their situation admits; no wonder that they should copy their follies, since *that* they can do most easily, and *that* most suits their natural depravity.

But to him, whose industry is his support, I would observe: he should not think, that, if they, who enjoy the plenty he wants, are prodigal of their time—misemploy it—waste it; *their* abuse of it will at all excuse *his*. He cannot possibly be ignorant how unfitting such a waste of time is—how much good it hinders—how much evil it occasions—and how much a greater sufferer he will be from it, than those who are in more plentiful circumstances.

And let it be considered, by both high and low, rich and poor, that there can be nothing so becoming them, there can be nothing that will give them so solid, so lasting a satisfaction, as to be employed in serving mankind—in furthering their happiness. What thought can we entertain more honourable with respect to God himself, than that “his mercy is over all his works”—that his goodness is continually displaying itself through the whole extent of being—that the unthankful and the evil be not only forbears, but still seeks to awaken to a due acknowledgment of him—to a just sense of their true interest.

by persevering in his kindness towards them, by continuing to them the blessings they so ill deserve?

And if the consideration of the universal Creator as thus acting be really that which makes him appear most amiable to us—which affects us with the most profound veneration of him, and chiefly renders it pleasing to us to contemplate his other perfections; what worth do we evidence, how highly do we recommend ourselves, when employed either in qualifying ourselves for doing good, or in doing it,—when we have the common advantage our constant pursuit—when we seek for pleasure in making ourselves of use, and feel happiness in the degree in which we communicate it?

III. What employment of our time the relation in which we stand to God suggests to us, I am next to shew.

Every one who reads this, I may justly suppose sensible that there is a nature superior to his own, and even possessed of the highest excellencies—that to it we owe our existence, owe the endowments, which place us at the head of all the creatures upon earth, owe whatever can make us desire to have our existence continued to us—that by this superior nature *alone*, many of our wants can be supplied—that on it we entirely depend—that from its favour the whole of our increasing happiness can be expected,

From what we thus know of God and ourselves, there must arise certain duties towards him, the performance of which will have its demand on our time. His perfections require our highest veneration; this cannot be exercised or preserved without our serious attention to and recollection of them. His mercies demand our most humble and grateful acknowledgments; proper acts of thanksgiving are therefore what we should be blameable to omit; they daily become us, and should be made with all the solemnity and fervour, that suit the kindness vouchsafed us, and the majesty of him to whom we address ourselves*. A

due sense of our weakness and wants is a constant admonition to us to look up to that Being whose power and goodness are infinite, and to cherish such dispositions as are most likely to recommend us to him: hence it is evident what stress we should lay upon those awful invocations of the divine interposition in our favour, and upon that devout confession of our unworthiness of it, which have a natural tendency to keep the Deity present to our remembrance, and to purify our hearts.

Public acknowledgments of the goodness of God, and application for his blessings, contribute to give a whole community suitable apprehensions of him; and these, if it be my duty to entertain, it is equally my duty to propagate; both as the regard I pay the divine excellencies is hereby fully expressed, and as the same advantage, that I receive from such apprehensions, will be received by all whom they affect in the same manner with me. Hence it is clearly our duty to join in the public worship—to promote by our regular attendance upon it, a like regularity in others.

These observations will, I hope, be thought sufficient proofs, that, from the relation we bear to God, a certain portion of our time is his claim—ought to be set apart for meditation upon him, for prayer to him, and for such other exercise of our reason as more immediately respects him, and suits our obligations towards him.

Dean Bolton.

§ 150. On the Employment of Time.

ESSAY THE THIRD.

‘Since all things are uncertain, favour yourself.’ Where have I met with it? Whosoever the advice is, it proceeds upon a supposition absolutely false, That there is an uncertainty in all things: and were the supposition true, the inference would be wrong; did we allow, that there was such an uncertainty in all things, it would be wrongly concluded from thence, that we should favour ourselves.

* Never to acknowledge the enjoyments and privileges we have received, and hold, of God, is in effect to say that we received them from him: not to apply to him for a supply of our wants, is to deny, either our wants, or his power of helping us. *Religion of Nature delineated*, p. 121.

If I should never pray to God, or worship him at all, such a total omission would be equivalent to this assertion, there is no God, who governs the world, to be adored; which, if there is such a Being, must be contrary to truth. Alto generally and seriously to neglect this duty, though not always, will favour, if not directly proclaim, the same untruth. For certainly to worship God after this manner is only to worship him accidentally, which is to declare it a great accident that he is worshipped at all, and this approaches as near as possible to a total neglect. Besides, such a sparing and infrequent worshipper of the Deity, betrays such an habitual disregard of him, as will render every religious act insignificant and null. *Id.* p. 12.

First, there is not the uncertainty here supposed. With regard to those things, which call us to thoughts very different from that of *favouring* ourselves—which should withdraw our attention from our own will, our own liking—which suggest to us quite other considerations than of taking our ease, and indulging our appetites—which should make the animal life the least of our concern—which should render us only solicitous to purify ourselves, and be useful to our fellow-creatures; with regard to these things, I say, we have either absolute certainty, or the highest degree of probability.

To have produced so much beauty and order, as every where discover themselves, intelligence was not only *requisite*, but great wisdom and power. The beneficial effects naturally resulting from the things thus beautifully formed and orderly disposed, *demonstrate* the goodness, as well as the wisdom and power of their author.

That the benefits he designed, should constantly take place, *must*, as he is a good being, be agreeable to his will; and whatever hinders their taking effect, *must be disagreeable to it*.

We cannot have a surer mark of what pleases him, than its being productive of happiness; and whatever has misery accompanying it, carries with it the clearest proof of its displeasing him.

A virtuous practice greatly furthering the happiness of mankind, *must be pleasing to their Maker*; a vicious one *must displease him*, as it necessarily obstructs their happiness.

If from any accidental indisposition of things, as from the number of the criminal, virtue should *ever* miss its reward, there is *great likelihood* that it will *elsewhere* receive it; and, if vice, by a like accident, should, in particular instances, not carry with it those marks of its offending the Governor of the world, which it in most cases bears, there is the *highest probability* that it will have its punishment in some future state. There is that probability in favour of *virtue*, not only from what our reasonings on the justice and goodness of God induce us to think it has to expect from him, but also from the visible manner in which he signifies his approbation of it. He has impressed a sense of its worth on the minds of all mankind—he has made satisfaction inseparable from a conformity to it—he has appointed many advantages,

in the ordinary course of things, its attendants: which seem concurring *assurances*, that to whatsoever disadvantages it may now, occasionally expose us, they will be at length fully recompensed. And there is the *probability* I have mentioned, that the guilt will not be always without a punishment adequate to their crimes, not only from the apprehensions we may justly entertain of a just Governor of the universe; but, also, from the manner in which he, to the notice of all men, expresses his abhorrence of vice; annexing to *many* crimes immediate inconveniences—giving *others* a very short respite from the severest distresses, the painfullest diseases—allowing *none* to have our reason and conscience on their side, to be approved by us in our hours of seriousness and calm reflection.

Virtue is, *evidently*, preserved and promoted by frequent consideration—by diligence and application—by the denial of our appetites—by the restraint of our inclinations—by a constant watchfulness over our passions—by cherishing in ourselves sentiments of humanity and benevolence. Vice is, as *manifestly*, produced, and confirmed by inattention—by supineness and carelessness—by favouring our appetites—by consulting rather what we are disposed to, than what is best for us, rather what inclination, than what reason suggests—by an attachment to the satisfaction of the present moment, to our immediate profit or convenience—by adopting narrow, selfish principles.

Thus it will appear, that there is by no means an uncertainty in all things. Most certain it is from whence virtue has its security and improvement. Equally certain is it how we become bad, and how we are made worse. Virtue has, in the nature of things, a reward of which it cannot be deprived, and vice as sure a punishment. All those accidents which obstruct either the advantages suiting a virtuous practice, or the sufferings that a vicious one ought to feel, may *fitly* carry our thoughts to some future state, when each will have its full desert from that Being, who has so clearly expressed as well his approbation of virtue, as his abhorrence of vice; and whose goodness, wisdom and power, as they admit of *demonstration*, so they cannot but be believed to concur in bestowing those rewards and punishments, which will be most for the

welfare of the noblest part of the creation, the intelligent part of it.

But if there were the uncertainty that is not; the right consequence would not be, Favour yourself: it would be, Secure yourself: Provide against the worst. Let your present enjoyments be directed by the influence they may have on your future happiness: consider the whole possible extent of your existence, and forego the satisfaction of a few moments, rather than hazard the loss of a good that may continue for endless ages.

Such seem the proper inferences in this case; and the security of ourselves is very unlikely to be effected by favouring ourselves: the result of this, in a remoter period, may, with the highest degree of probability, be conjectured from what is, every day, experienced.

Bear and forbear, is the lesson for him who merely seeks to give his present life all the comfort in his power. Great inconveniences we cannot even here avoid, but by submitting to lesser.

Freedom from pain is the price of the enjoyments we deny ourselves; and strength of body purchased by the exercise that so severely fatigues it.

To what sleepless nights would he be condemned, whose ease throughout the day was to have no interruption? How little relish should we have of our food, were we to know nothing of the disquiet of hunger? The man who would most taste the gratifications of sense, must be the most sparing in his application to them; *thence it is* they not only are heightened, but continued to us. It seems the condition of our being, that we should have no pleasure *gratis*—that we should pay for each, before or after its enjoyment. To decline whatever we could be less pleased with, is the surest way to increase both the number of our sufferings, and their weight.

What can be more precarious than the continuance of human life? Who in his twentieth year acknowledges not, how uncertain it is whether he shall see his fortieth? Yet no one of common prudence seeks barely to crowd as much satisfaction into his life, as can consist with his reaching that period: there is no prudent man but denies himself many things, in hopes of attaining a much longer term.

We must unusually fail in the love of our children, if we would not pursue their welfare, in the same way by which we judge

our own best consulted. But where is the advocate for "Favour yourself, since all things are uncertain," who, if discretion makes any part of his character, governs himself by that principle in their education—who does not restrain them in a thousand instances? while yet the uneasiness it gives, and the tears it costs them, may probably never find that very small recompence, which must be the utmost he can propose from it. I say, this recompence may, *probably*, never be found; a late eminent mathematician having, upon an exact calculation, observed, that one half of those that are born, are dead in seventeen years time.

Some claim to a public spirit, to a love of their country, we find made by the generality of us, even in this very profligate age. But from him, whose rule it is to favour himself, the public can have nothing to expect. Were this the prevailing principle among us, 'tis obvious how little regard would be shewn to the common welfare.

All of the learned professions would regulate their application, by its subserviency to their maintenance, and think they had nothing so much to study, as how to make their fortune.

Soldier and sailor would have no notion of any honour distinct from their advantage—of any obligation they could be under, when their pay might be safe, to endanger their persons.

The people would judge none so fit to represent them, as they who had been at the greatest expence in corrupting them: and the representatives of the people would see no reason why the whole of what was to be gained should go to their constituents.

In short, nothing but supineness and sloth—an attachment to their ease, and the gratification of their senses—low, unmanly views—pursuits throughout the most selfish and sordid could prevail, among all orders and degrees of men, in any country, where the received doctrine was, *favour yourself*.

Hence certainly it is, that not only the better constituted governments, but even the nations of a less refined policy, have encouraged so much an indifference to the scanty portion of life here allotted us—to the continuance, the ease, the conveniences of it; exciting, by various methods, each member of the community, to have chiefly at heart the public interest—to be ever di-

ligent

ligent and active in promoting it—to submit to any difficulties for the service of his country, and to despise death in its defence.

Nor do we, universally, esteem any characters more, than those of the persons who have distinguished themselves by their disinterestedness—by their zeal for the common good—by their slighting all private advantages that came in competition with it.

What has been the language of the more generous Heathen, but the very reverse of Favour thyself? *Plato* advises his friend *Archytas* to consider “that we are not born for ourselves alone—that our country, our parents, our friends have their respective claims upon us.” *Epist.* ix. p. 358. vol. 3.

Aristotle, in settling the true difference between the lawful and culpable love of ourselves, observes, that such love of ourselves is, undoubtedly, blameable, as induces us to seek as large a share as may be, of wealth, honour, and sensual pleasure. He, afterwards, considers a life of reason and virtue, as the proper life of a man, and pronounces him the true lover of himself, who makes such a life his care.

He goes on, “When all are intent on the practice of what is right, and each lays himself out on the worthiest actions, the public welfare will, thereby, be effectually provided for, and every private person consult his own greatest happiness. It is most truly said, of the good man, that he will serve his friends and his country—will do it, even at the expense of his life. For, as to wealth, honour, and all those other goods about which there is so much stir in the world, he will have no regard to them, when they come into competition with the discharge of his duty. He will rather chuse to live one year well, than many at random. He is justly thought the good man, who has nothing so much at heart, as how to act rightly.”

To mention another *Greek* writer; We are born, says the excellent emperor *Antoninus*, to assist each other, l. 2. § 1. His counsel is, “Whatsoever you do, do it with a view to your being a good man; good, not in the ordinary, but in the strict and proper sense of the word,” l. iv. § 10. “In this delight, in this repose yourself, in passing from one useful action to another, still mindful of the Deity.” l. vi. § 7.

“Whatsoever I do,” says he, “by myself, or the assistance of others, ought wholly to be directed by what the common advantage requires.” l. vii. § 5.

He, elsewhere, censures every action of ours, that has no reference either immediately, or more remotely, to the duties of social life, l. ix. § 23. To despise, says *Tully*, and make no account of pleasure, life, wealth, in comparison of the public welfare, is the part of a great and generous mind.—A life of toil and trouble in order to promote, if possible, the good of all mankind, would be much more agreeable to nature, than to pass one’s days in solitude, not only without any care, but enjoying the greatest pleasures, and having every thing could be wanted at command. *De Off.* l. iii. 283, 284.

We are all, according to *Seneca*, members of one great body, Ep. 95. We must consult the happiness of others, if we would our own. In his treatise of a *Happy Life*, mentioning what the man must be, who may hope to pass hence to the abodes of the celestial beings; part of his description of him is, “That he lives as if he knew himself born for others—consults in all he does the approbation of his conscience—regulates his every action by considering it as well known to the public, as it is to himself—treats the whole world as his country—regards the gods as present wherever he is, and as remarking whatever he acts and speaks.”

True happiness is, throughout this author’s works, considered as derived from virtue—from the steady pursuit of what is right and our duty.

These reflections will, I hope, appear not improperly introducing the consideration of the part we have to act as expectants of happiness in a future state; the subject of the following essay.

This expectation does not indeed furnish any employment of our time that would not be comprehended under the heads on which I have already enlarged; but it is the strongest possible enforcement of what they teach us.

Can I suppose that beyond the grave there is any happiness prepared for me, if I live unmindful of the privileges here vouchsafed me—if, when I am placed above the beasts, I will put myself upon a level with them—if that spiritual part of me, which makes me a fit subject for this

happiness; be neglected, and all my care and pains laid out on my body, on what was earth so lately, and must so speedily be earth again?

Are there certain dispositions which prepare us for, and which, by being perfected, probably constitute the happiness of another life; and may we hope to obtain it, when our pursuits contributed to suppress these dispositions, or when we are wholly regardless of cultivating them?

Whatever I hope for in a future abode, I ought to think the reward of something here done by me; and when the time for action here is so short, even in its longest continuance—when likewise our opportunities are so few, and so irrecoverably lost, we must conclude it most fitting, in order to the success of our hopes, to embrace the opportunity before us; not to neglect it from a presumption of finding others which perhaps may never come, or, if they do come, may be less favourable to us than the present; but to derive from this every advantage it is capable of yielding us.

Farther, if according to the greater or less use of which we make ourselves to our fellow-creatures, we more or less answer the end of our creation, we must conceive this to be a point, our special regard to which will be the necessary consequence of the views we have beyond the grave. The bliss we then promise ourselves cannot be thought a likelier reward of any practice, than of that which aims at the most extensive good; nor can one of common sense think such happiness likely to be our portion, after a life spent as unprofitably, as that of those creatures, the whole of whose satisfactions we all confine to those they at present enjoy—to their present existence. Hence our hopes after death will be perpetually urging us to what we can do most for the good of mankind, and must be a motive to it of the greatest weight.

Thus, likewise, when I contemplate a more desirable state of being, than what I am now granted, awaiting me at my departure hence; as it is impossible that I should not at the same time take into my consideration, to whom I must owe this blessing, from whom it can be received; I must hereby be necessarily led to a great desire of pleasing him from whom it is to come, and therefore to all such application to him, and acknowledgment of his excellencies, as can be supposed due from and required of me.

To all the several tasks I have mentioned, we are thus particularly directed by attending to the happiness reserved for us; the consideration of it thus strongly enforces their performance.

How far it must in general contribute to the best employment of our time, the following observations may, I hope, fully convince us.

If we survey the things, on the value of which we are universally agreed, we shall perceive few, if any, of them obtained or secured without more or less care on our part, and some of them only the recompence of our painfullest endeavour. The long enjoyment of health is in vain expected, if we wholly decline the fatigue of exercise, and the uneasiness of self-denial. The greatest estate must at length be wasted by him, who will be at no trouble in the management of it, who cannot torment his brains with examining accounts, and regulating the various articles of a large expence. Whose power is so established that the preservation of it costs him not much solicitude—many anxious thoughts; and compels him not to mortify himself in numerous instances? This is the case of them whom *we esteem* the most fortunate of their kind. As to the generality, how difficult do they find the acquisition of the meanest of these advantages? What years of diligence does it cost them to raise but a moderate fortune? Vast numbers we find struggling through out their lives for a bare support.

The chief blessings of life—the goods most worthy our pursuit, are not only *for the most part*, but *altogether*, the fruits of long and unwearied endeavours after them. Where is the very useful art that can be learned without a close and tedious application—that we can make any tolerable progress in, before many of our days are passed? How much, and what an attentive experience—what repeated observations, and how exact a reasoning upon them, are necessary to form us to any degree of wisdom?—Duly to regulate our passions—to have them under command—rightly directed, and more or less warm proportionably to the influence their object has upon our happiness, will cost us, as every one is sensible, a watchfulness and care of such continuance, as is submitted to by few even of those, who best know how far it would be overpaid by the good its participation.

If then we pay so dear for every satisfaction

faction we now enjoy—if there be nothing desirable on earth but what has its price of labour set upon it, and what is most desirable comes to us by the most labour; who in his wits can believe that happiness far exceeding the utmost in our present state, will at length be our portion without any solicitude we need be at about it—without any qualifications we have to acquire in order to it—without any pains we are to take after it? Nothing in Paganism or Mahomedism, nothing in Popery is so absurd as this supposition.

There is an uniformity in all the proceedings of God. As they are all grounded on an unerring wisdom, they must testify their correspondence to it, by what they have to each other; and so we find they do in all cases wherein we can fathom them. We know not, indeed, in *what way* we are to be made happy in another life; but *with what* our being so is connected—*as what* it must depend, we are sufficiently instructed. The means of making ourselves thus happy which are put in our power, plainly teach, that by *their use* it must be effected. Lesser goods, derived to us only by our care and industry, demonstrate how we are to secure greater. The chief blessings, that are now within our reach, being never vouchsafed but to our extraordinary efforts—to our most earnest endeavours to gain them, lead us to the fullest conviction, that the same must be the condition of whatever enjoyments we can promise ourselves after our death—that they will only be the reward of the diligence with which they have been sought—of the difficulties their pursuit has occasioned us.

The Atheist himself—he who having no views beyond this world, gives his lusts their full range in it, acts with abundantly more sense and consistency, than he who, full of the hopes of immortality, yet consults his humour or his ease, his pleasure or his profit, regardless of any understanding he has to improve, or any progress in virtue he has to make. Nor is there any thing that so much confirms the irreligious man in his bad principles, as his observing this conduct in them who profess to believe a God and another life. He thinks, and, I must own, but too justly, that it is the same thing not to be influenced by such a belief, and not to have it—that it is even much more reasonable to give up all expectations of future hap-

piness, than to expect it, and yet do nothing in order to it—do nothing that can appear at all qualifying us for, or enabling us to it: in a word, he rightly thinks that, supposing there be a God of that perfect justice and wisdom which he is represented, he cannot make any difference hereafter between them who have absolutely denied his justice—his wisdom—nay his very being, and them who, with all their acknowledgments of him and his perfections, would yet never sacrifice any of their inclinations to him—would not be at any pains to know his will, or, if they did know it, would only so far obey it, as it was agreeable to their own.

I hardly can quit this subject. So great is the danger—so certain, I may say, is the mischief of persuading ourselves, that an eternal happiness will recompense the little we do to secure it, that I scarcely know when I have said enough to evince what conduct alone it can reward.

As the visible world is the only universal guide to our conjectures on the invisible, and therein, as I have observed, the method of Providence in dispensing its blessing, is manifest to every eye; all those which can most engage our wishes depending wholly on what we do to obtain them: as, likewise, whether we consider the wisdom of God, or his truth, or his justice, they all concur in teaching us this lesson, that an ever-continuing felicity can only be prepared for a distinguished virtue.

As things, I say, are thus, may it not properly be asked, What can it be that so strangely infatuates us—that possesses us with hopes so extravagantly absurd—that makes a pursuit so lazy and remiss, which ought to be so vigorous and uninterrupted? I know not what this possibly can be, but, either, the numbers that countenance our practice, or, the reliance we have on the Deity's unbounded goodness.

As to the former, how little stress we should lay on numbers, will be evident from these four considerations.

First, They, who in every age, are most commended for their wisdom and prudence, never take the multitude for their pattern; but, on the other hand, constantly live in a direct opposition to its practices, and dissuade all, to whom they are well-wishers from them.

Secondly, Those follies and vices, which are the reproach of numbers, are not therefore, the less mischievous in their consequences.

sequences. The increasing multitudes of the lewd and drunken do not, in any instance, occasion lewdness and drunkenness to have more favourable circumstances attending them, either with respect to the persons, or the posterity of the guilty: and if God be, in no instance, more favourable to the vicious in this world, because of their numbers; we have hence too sad a proof that they have not the least ground to expect he should be so in the next.

Thirdly, What we call great numbers, are, probably in respect of the whole creation of rational beings, extremely few; perhaps no more than some few grains of sand, in comparison of those amazing heaps that spread the deserts of the earth, and shores of the ocean. Supposing, therefore, all offenders among the human kind, punished by God according to their deserts; that punishment might be making examples of a very small, of the very smallest part of his creatures, for the good of the rest—for preserving innumerable millions—an infinite race in their due obedience.

Fourthly, An established order taking place in all the works of God that we are acquainted with; every thing in the natural world being subjected to certain laws; and in the moral world, good having still a tendency to produce good, nor ever failing to do it, unless from some accidental hindrances; and evil, when things are in their proper course, producing evil: we have very strong reason to believe, that an unchangeable God—he whose wisdom uniformly displays itself—has fixed things thus, that thus they will proceed to all eternity; good following from good; evil from evil; with this difference alone, with respect to us, in another state, that all hindrances of the natural consequences of things will there be removed—nothing will prevent the virtuous man's reaping the fruits of his virtue, nor will any thing hinder the whole of the dismal effects of vice from being felt by them, who have here allowed themselves in it. And, if this be the case, than which nothing is more probable, it is then quite clear, that all the hopes of the guilty from their numbers must be utterly vain—that it would be full as reasonable to think a plague could not be a dangerous distemper, because it is so infectious an one; as to think that we shall be safe amidst our crimes, because of the multitude that share them.

With regard to the goodness of God;

how groundless our reliance must be upon it, when we act contrary to the ends for which we were made—when we neglect our opportunities, and abuse our capacities, will, I hope, be sufficiently plain to us, if we attend to the following short remarks.

1. We ascribe goodness to God as a perfection; but nothing can be a perfection in him, which has, morally speaking, a necessary tendency to make his creatures less perfect—less careful to answer the ends of their creation; and this the divine goodness would certainly do, if it were indeed such as allowed us nothing to fear, tho' we neglected to use rightly the abilities and opportunities afforded us.

2. As God is the Governor of the world—is acknowledged so by all who own his being; we must, therefore, consider his goodness, as that of a governor, or as consistent with, and agreeable to, a wise government: but can this be said of his goodness, if it exempt from all punishment our wilful and continued disobedience to his laws, and thereby encourage us to disobey them?

3. One attribute or perfection of the Deity cannot clash with another: his goodness, for instance, with his justice: but the punishment of evil is as much a part of justice, as the rewarding of good. To treat evil, as if it were not evil, can neither be agreeable to justice or truth; and this would be the case—evil would be regarded as if it were not evil, did the goodness of God so favour the wilful offender, that his crimes would never receive their desert.

4. To restrain evil, to obstruct its progress, must be the care of a good Governor, nay would be the surest proof of his goodness. To punish, therefore, such as act contrary to the law of their nature—contrary to the well-being of society, and therein contrary to their own and the common happiness, is not only a part of justice, but even of goodness itself. We could not consider God as good, had he not properly guarded against his creatures corrupting themselves, and against that corruption extending itself: and what are the discouragements to this, but in the way of punishment—but by the sufferings the guilty have to fear? The more there are who act in defiance of these sufferings; the more necessary it becomes to inflict them; and offenders can have no

reason

reason to think that the mercy of God will spare them, when the greatest mercy is shewn in obviating the mischief of such examples, by treating them according to what they have deserved.

Let us behold the goodness of God in this light, and this is that in which we ought to see it—this is its true representation; and thus seen, it cannot but convince us how impossible it is that we should have any thing to hope after a life unprofitably, vainly spent—how much such a life has necessarily to fear.

Dean Bolton.

CATECHETICAL LECTURES.

§ 151. *Introduction to the Catechism.*

The Catechism begins with a recital of our baptismal vow, as a kind of preface to the whole. It then lays down the great christian principle of faith; and leaving all mysterious inquiries, in which this subject is involved, it passes on to the rules of practice. Having briefly recited these, it concludes with a simple, and very intelligible explanation of baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

The catechism then begins very properly, with a recital of our baptismal vow, as the best preface to that belief, and those rules of practice, in which that vow engaged us.—But before we examine the vow itself, two appendages of it require explanation—the use of sponsors—and the addition of a name.

With regard to the sponsor, the church probably imitates the appointment of the legal guardian, making the best provision it can for the pious education of orphans, and deserted children. The temporal and the spiritual guardian may equally betray their trust: both are culpable: both accountable: but surely the latter breaks the more sacred engagement.

As to promising and vowing in the name of another (which seems to carry so harsh a sound) the sponsor only engages for the child, as any one would engage for another, in a matter which is manifestly for his advantage: and on a supposition, that the child hereafter will see it to be so—that is, he promises, as he takes it for granted, the child itself would have promised, if it had been able.

With regard to the name, it is no part of the sacrament; nor pretends to scriptural authority. It rests merely on ancient usage. A custom had generally obtained,

of giving a new name, upon adopting a new member into a family. We find it common among the Greeks, the Romans, and the Jews; nay, we read that even God himself, when he received Abram into covenant, giving an early sanction to this usage, changed his name to Abraham. In imitation of this common practice, the old christians gave baptismal names to their children, which were intended to point out their heavenly adoption, as their surnames distinguished their temporal alliance.

From considering the use of sponsors, and of the name in baptism, we proceed next to the vow itself, which is thus expressed. "My godfathers did promise three things in my name: 1st, That I should renounce the devil, and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh. 2dly, That I should believe all the articles of the christian faith; and 3dly, That I should keep God's holy will, and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life."

First then, we promise to "renounce the devil, and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh." "The devil, the world, and the flesh," is a comprehensive mode of expressing every species of sin, however distinguished; and from whatever source derived: all which we can only engage to renounce as far as we are able; but also to take pains in tracing the labyrinths of our own hearts; and in removing the glosses of self-deceit. Without this, all renunciation of sin is pretence.

Being thus enjoined to renounce our gross, habitual sins, and those bad inclinations, which lead us into them; we are required next to "believe all the articles of the christian faith." This is a natural progression. When we are thoroughly convinced of the malignity of sin, we in course wish to avoid the ill consequences of it; and are prepared to give a fair hearing to the evidence of religion. There is a close connection between vice and infidelity. They mutually support each other. The same connection subsists between a well-disposed mind, and the truths of religion: and faith perhaps is not so involuntary an act, as many of our modern philosophers would persuade us.

After "believing the articles of the christian faith," we are lastly enjoined to "keep God's holy will and commandments."

"ments." Here too is the same natural progression. As the renunciation of sin prepares the way for faith, so does faith, lead directly to obedience. They seem related to each other, as the mean and the end. "The end of the commandment," faith the apostle, "is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." Faith (which is the act of believing upon rational evidence) is the great fountain, from which all christian virtues spring. No man will obey a law, till he hath informed himself whether it be properly authorized: or, in other words, till he believe in the jurisdiction that enacted it.—If our faith in Christ doth not lead us to obey him; it is what the scriptures call a dead faith, in opposition to a saving one.

To this inseparable connection between faith and obedience, St. Paul's doctrine may be objected, where he seems to lay the whole stress on faith, in opposition to works.—But it is plain, that St. Paul's argument requires him to mean by faith, the whole system of the christian religion (which is indeed the meaning of the word in many other parts of scripture); and by works, which he sets in opposition to it, the moral law. So that in fact, the apostle's argument relates not to the present question; but tends only to establish the superiority of christianity. The moral law, argues the apostle, which claimed on the righteousness of works, makes no provision for the deficiencies of man. Christianity alone, by opening a door of mercy, gave him hopes of that salvation, which the other could not pretend to give.

Upon renouncing sin, believing the articles of the christian faith, and keeping God's holy commandments, as far as sinful man can keep them, we are entitled by promise to all the privileges of the gospel. We "become members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven." We are redeemed through the merits of Christ; pardoned through the mercies of God; and rewarded with a blessed immortality.

This account of our baptismal vow concludes with a question, leading us to acknowledge the necessity of observing this vow; and to declare our belief, that our only hope of keeping it rests upon the assistance of God.

Gilpin.

* See Rom. iii. 28. and indeed great part of the epistle.

§ 152. On the Creed—the Belief of God.

The creed begins with a profession of our belief in "God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth."

The being of a God is one of those truths, which scarce require proof. A proof seems rather an injury, as it supposes doubt. However, as young minds, though not sceptical, are uninformed, it may not be improper to select, out of the variety of arguments which evince this great truth, two or three of the most simple.

The existence of a Deity, we prove from the light of nature. For his attributes, at least in any perfection, we must look into scripture.

A few plain and simple arguments drawn from the creation of the world—the preservation of it—and the general consent of mankind, strike us with more conviction, than all the subtleties of metaphysical deduction.

We prove the being of a God first from the creation of the world.

The world must have been produced either by design, or by chance. No other mode of origin can be supposed. Let us see then with which of these characters it is impressed.

The characteristic of the works of design, is a relation of parts, in order to produce an end.—The characteristic of the works of chance is just the reverse.—When we see stones answering each other, laid in the form of a regular building, we immediately say, they were put together by design: but when we see them thrown about in a disorderly heap, we say as confidently, they have been thrown so by chance.

Now, in the world, and all its appendages, there is plainly this appearance of design. One part relates to another; and the whole together produces an end. The sun, for instance, is connected with the earth, by warming it into a proper heat, for the production of its fruits; and furnishing it with rain and dew. The earth again is connected with all the vegetables which it produces, by providing them with proper soils, and juices for their nourishment. These again are connected with animals, by supplying them with food. And the whole together produces the great

end of sustaining the lives of innumerable creatures.

Nor is design shewn only in the grand fabric of the world, and all its relative appendages: it is equally shewn in every part. It is seen in every animal, adapted in all its peculiarities to its proper mode of life. It is seen in every vegetable, furnished with parts exactly suited to its situation. In the least, as well as in the greatest of nature's productions, it is every where apparent. The little creeper upon the wall, extending its tenacious fibres, draws nourishment from the crannies of the stones; and flourishes where no other plant could live.

If then the world, and every part of it, are thus marked with the characters of design, there can be no difficulty in acknowledging the author of such design—of such amazing contrivance and variety, to be a being of infinite wisdom and power. We call a man ingenious, who makes even a common globe, with all the parts of the earth delineated upon it. What shall we say then of the author of the great original itself, in all its grandeur, and furnished with all its various inhabitants?

The argument drawn from the preservation of the world, is indeed rather the last argument advanced a step farther.

If chance could be supposed to produce a regular form, yet it is certainly beyond the highest degree of credulity, to suppose, it could continue this regularity for any time. But we find it has been continued: we find, that near 6000 years have made no change in the order and harmony of the world. The sun's action upon the earth hath ever been regular. The production of trees, plants, and herbs, hath ever been uniform. Every seed produces now the same fruit it ever did. Every species of animal life is still the same. Could chance continue this regular arrangement? Could any thing continue it, but the hand of an omnipotent God?

Lastly, we see this great truth, the being of a God, witnessed by the general consent of mankind. This general consent must arise either from tradition, or it must be the result of men's own reasoning. Upon either supposition, it is an argument equally strong. If the first supposition be allowed, it will be difficult to assign any source of this tradition, but God himself. If the second, it can scarce be supposed that all mankind, in different parts of the

world, should agree in the belief of a thing, which never existed. For though doubts have arisen concerning this general belief, yet it is now pretty well ascertained, from the accounts of travellers, that no nation hath yet been discovered, among whom some traces of religious worship have not been found.

Be it so, says the objector; yet still we find single persons, even in civilized countries, and some of them men of enlarged capacities, who have not only had their doubts on this subject; but have proclaimed aloud their disbelief of a divine being.

We answer, that it is more than probable, no man's infidelity on this head was ever thoroughly settled. Bad men, rather endeavour to convince themselves, than are really convinced.—But even on a supposition, that a few such persons could be found, what is their testimony against so great a majority, as the rest of mankind? The light of the sun is universally acknowledged, though it happens, that, now and then, a man may be born blind.

But since, it seems, there are difficulties in supposing a divine creator, and preserver of the world, what system of things does the atheist suppose attended with fewer? He sees the world produced before him. He sees it hath been created; and is preserved. Some account of this matter must be given. If ours displease him; let us have his.

The experiment hath been tried. We have had many atheistical creeds: none of which hath stood the test of being handed down with any degree of credit into future times.

The atheist's great argument indeed against a Deity, is levelled at the apparent injustice of his government. It was an objection of ancient date; and might have had its weight in heathen times: but it is one of the blessings, which attends christianity, that it satisfies all our doubts on this head; and gives us a rational and easy solution of this poignant objection. What if we observe an inaccurate distribution of the things of this world? What if virtue be depressed, and vice triumphant? It is nothing, says the voice of religion, to him, who believes this life to be an inconsiderable part of his being: a point only in the expanse of eternity: who believes he is sent into this world, merely to prepare himself for a better. This world, he knows, is intended neither for reward, nor punishment. Happiness unquestionably attends virtue even here, and

and misery, vice: but it is not the happiness of a splendid station, but of a peaceful mind; nor is it the misery of low circumstances, but of a guilty conscience. The things of this world are not, in their own nature, connected either with happiness or misery. Attended sometimes by one, and sometimes by the other, they are merely the means of trial. One man is tempted with riches, and another with poverty; but God intends neither an elevated, nor a depressed situation as the ultimate completion of his will.

Besides, if worldly prosperity even was the indication of God's favour, yet good men may have failings and imprudencies enough about them to deserve misfortune; and bad men virtues, which may deserve success. Why should imprudence, though joined with virtue, partake of its reward? Or the generous purpose share in the punishment, though connected with vice?

Thus then we see the being of a God is the universal creed of nature. But though nature could investigate the simple truth, she could not preserve it from error. Nature merely takes her notions from what she sees, and what she hears, and hath ever moulded her gods in the likeness of things in heaven, and things on earth. Hence every part of the creation, animate and inanimate, hath, by turns, been an object of worship. And even the most refined nations, we know, had gross conceptions on this head. The wisest of them indeed, by observing the wonders of creation, could clothe the Deity with wisdom and power: but they could go no farther. The virtues of their heroes afforded them the highest ideas of perfection: and with these they arrayed their gods; mixing also with their virtues, such vices, as are found in the characters of the best of men.

For just notions of the Deity, we must have recourse then to revelation alone. Revelation removes all these absurdities. It dispels the clouds of ignorance; and unveils the divine majesty, as far as it can be the object of human contemplation. The lax notions of libertinism, on one hand, which make the Deity an inobservant governor; and the gloomy ideas of superstition, on the other, which suppose him to be a dark malignant being, are equally exposed. Here we are informed of the omniscience and omnipresence of God. Here we learn, that his wisdom and power

are equalled by his goodness; and that his mercy is over all his works. In short, we learn from revelation, that we are in the hands of a being, whose knowledge we cannot evade, and whose power we cannot resist; who is merciful and good to all his creatures; and will be ever ready to assist and reward those, who endeavour to conform themselves to his will: but whose justice, at the same time, accompanying his mercy, will punish the bold and careless sinner in proportion to his guilt.

Gilpin.

§ 153. *On the Creed continued—the Belief of Jesus Christ.*

After professing our belief in God, the creed proceeds with a profession of our belief "in Jesus Christ, his son, our Lord."

A person celebrated as Jesus Christ was, we may suppose, would naturally find a place in the profane history of his times. It may not be amiss, therefore, to introduce the evidence we are about to collect, with the testimony of some of the more eminent of the heathen writers, who have mentioned him. They will at least inform us, that such a person lived at the time we assert; and that he was the author of a new religion.—I shall quote only Suetonius, Tacitus, and Pliny.

Suetonius*, tells us, that "the emperor Claudius drove all the Jews from Rome, who, at the instigation of one Christ, were continually making disturbances."

Tacitus†, speaking of the persecution of christians, tells us, "that the author of that name was Christ, who was put to death by Pontius Pilate, in the reign of Tiberius."

Pliny's‡ testimony is more large. It is contained in a letter, written to the emperor Trajan, desiring his instructions with regard to christians. He blames their obstinacy in refusing to sacrifice to the Roman deities—but from their own confession can draw nothing, but that they assemble, on a certain day, before sun-rise—that they pay divine honours to Christ as a God—that they bind themselves by a sacrament not to steal, nor to commit adultery, nor to deceive—and that, after the performance of these rites, they join in one common meal. Nay, he examined, he says, two of them by torture: yet still he finds nothing obnoxious in their behaviour, except their absurd superstitions. He

† Lib. 15. ‡ Lib. 10.

thinks,

* In vita Claud. c. 25.

thinks, however, the matter should be inquired into: for christianity had brought religion into great disuse. The markets were crowded with victims; and scarce a purchaser came near them.

These writers afford us sufficient testimony, that Jesus Christ lived at the time we assert; and that he was the author of a new religion. They had opportunities of being well informed; could have no interest in falsifying; were no converts to the new sect; but talk of Christ, only as they would of any singular person, whom they had occasion to mention. Their testimony therefore is beyond cavil.

Let us now proceed a step farther, and examine the scripture evidence of Christ, which proves not only his existence; but that he is our Lord, or the Messiah:—and not only that he was the author of a new religion; but that this religion is true.

Upon examining the grand scripture evidence on this head, we find the greatest stress laid upon miracles and prophecies: both of which are direct appeals to God, by a claim to supernatural power. And though both these modes of evidence are calculated as well for us who live in remoter times, as for those who lived in the earliest; yet the evidence from miracles seems more particularly addressed to them; as that from prophecy is to us. They were the eye-witnesses of the miracles of the gospel, of which we have only the evidence at second-hand. Whereas prophecy is a mode of evidence, which increases through every age. The early christians had it in part; but to us this amazing web is still more unfolded; and more of its wonderful texture displayed.—Let us examine each in its order.

Among the eye-witnesses of the gospel miracles, were many learned men, as well as unlearned. The former had opportunity and abilities to examine the works before them; to trace out fraud, if any such were latent; and did unquestionably receive them with all that circumspection which was due to such wonderful exhibitions, before they embraced the christian faith; while the most ignorant spectator was a competent judge of matter of fact; and many of our Saviour's miracles were such as could not possibly, from the nature of the facts themselves, be coloured with fraud.

It had a strange sound to the prejudices of mankind, that a crucified malefactor was the Saviour of the world; and we

cannot suppose, that any man, much less that a multitude of men, would embrace such a belief without clear conviction: especially as no worldly advantage lay on the side of this belief; and the convert even renounced the world, and embraced a life of persecution.—Let us consider the single miracle of Christ's resurrection. Jesus had frequently mentioned it before his death; and the thing was so far in general credited, that the sepulchre was sealed, and an armed guard appointed to watch it. We may well suppose, therefore, that his favourers would naturally, upon this occasion, reason thus: "Jesus hath now put his pretensions upon a fair issue. He hath told us, he will arise from the dead on the third day:—here then let us suspend our judgment, and wait the result. Three days will determine whether he be an impostor, or the real Messiah."—It is very natural to suppose, that the favourers of Jesus would reason, after his death, in a manner like this: and it is beyond credibility, that any of them would have continued his disciples, had they found him falsifying in this point. But we know they did continue his disciples after this. We know also, that many proselytes, convinced by this very event, embraced the christian religion.—We have all the reason in the world therefore to believe, that they were fully satisfied. His miracles were to them a sufficient proof of his pretensions. All candid men would have acquiesced, as they did; and in their belief we have a very strong foundation for our own.

Again, with regard to prophecy, we observe, that the writers of the Old Testament seem, in various parts, to characterize some extraordinary person, who was in process of time to make his appearance in the world. The marks are peculiar, and can neither be mistaken nor misapplied. "He was to be born of a virgin—he was to turn the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just—though dignified with the characters of a prince, he was to be a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief—though described to be without sin, he was to be numbered with transgressors—his hands and his feet were to be pierced—he was to be made an offering for sin—and was never to see corruption."—These prophecies were published many hundred years before the birth of Christ: and had been all along in the hands, not only of the Jews, but of all men of letters.

The

The Old Testament had been early translated into the Greek language; and received into the politer libraries of those times.

With these ideas, let us open the New Testament, and it is obvious that no picture can be more like its original, than these prophecies of Christ in one Testament, are to his history in the other. Here we see that extraordinary virgin-birth unravelled.—Here we see a life spent in turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.—Here we find the prince of his people, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.—Here we see the Lord of righteousness numbered with transgressors—we see his hands and his feet pierced—we see him made an offering for sin—and we see realized that extraordinary idea of death without corruption.

It were an easy matter to carry this comparison through a more minute detail of circumstances: but I mean only to trace the outlines of this great resemblance. To complete the picture would be a copious work.

Besides these predictions, which related immediately to the life and death of Christ: there were many others, which deserve notice. Among these the two great leading prophecies were those of the calling of the Gentiles, and of the dispersion of the Jews.

The calling of the Gentiles was one of the earliest prophecies of the Old Testament. The Jews were distinguished in appearance, as the favourite people of God; and they were sufficiently elated upon that distinction. But if they had attended closely to their prophets, they might have discovered, that all the prophecies which described the happy state of the church, had evidently a more distant prospect, than to them. Those early promises, in particular, which were repeated to the patriarchs, were not merely confined to their posterity; but included "all the nations of the earth *"—And when the later prophets, as the great event approached, spoke a plainer, and a more intelligible language, the whole nation might have understood, as Simeon, and some of the wisest and most intelligible of them did understand, that "a light was sprung up to lighten the Gentiles."

The prophecy of the dispersion of the Jewish nation is also very antient, being attributed by Moses to the patriarch Jacob. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, until Shiloh come." Whatever may be the precise meaning of the word 'sceptre' in the original; and though it may not perhaps properly signify that idea of regal power, which it conveys to our ears; yet it certainly means some badge of authority, that implies a formed and settled government. And as to the word 'Shiloh,' all commentators, Jewish as well as Christian, explain it to mean the Messiah.—The sense therefore of the prophecy is plainly this—that the Jews should continue in the form of a society, till the time of the Messiah. Accordingly we find that, soon after Christ's death, the sceptre did depart from Judah: the Jews lost all form of a political society; and are a singular instance of a people, scattered over the whole earth, preserved to this day separate from all other people, and yet without a settlement any where.

Our Saviour's prophecy of the growth of his church, is likewise among the more remarkable predictions. He told his disciples, that "his religion was like a grain of mustard-seed, which was the least of all seeds; but when it grew up, it should become a great tree, and the fowls of the air should lodge in the branches of it." He told them also, that "the gates of hell should never prevail against it."

The Jewish religion was continually enforced by the idea of a jealous God, watching over it, and threatening judgments from heaven upon every transgression. The divine authority was stamped openly upon it. The people trembled, and worshipped.

When the impostor Mahomet set up for a reformer, he could not indeed enforce his religion by divine judgments; but he did it by temporal. He drew his sword; and held it to the breasts of his opposers; while he promised to the obedient a full gratification of their passions.

But in the Christian religion, nothing of this kind appeared. No temporal judgments threatened on one hand: no sensual indulgences allured on the other. A few desponding ignorant mechanics, the disciples of a person crucified as a common malefactor, were all the parade, with which

* See Gen. xii. 3. xviii. 18. xlii. 15. xvi. 4.

this religion was ushered into the world; and all the human assistance which it had to boast.—And yet this religion, which opposed the strongest prejudices, and was opposed by the greatest princes, made its way in a few years, from a remote corner, through the whole Roman empire.—Thus was our Saviour's prophecy, in opposition to all human calculation, exactly fulfilled. The least of all seeds became a spreading tree; and a church was established, which could not be destroyed by all the powers of hell.

But although the church of Christ could not be destroyed, it was corrupted; and in a course of years fell from its genuine purity. This corrupt state of it—the delusions of popery—the efforts of reformation, and various other circumstances relating to it, are not unreasonably supposed to be held forth, in the prophetic parts of the New Testament.

But I forbear to dwell upon prophecies, which are not obvious enough to carry general conviction; though many of them have been well explained by those*, who are versed in the histories to which they allude. Future times will, in all probability, reflect a stronger light upon them. Some of the great prophecies, which we have just considered, shone but with a feeble ray, during the times they were fulfilling, though they now strike us in so forcible a manner.

Gilpin.

§154. *The Creed continued—Conception and Birth of Christ, &c.*

We have now shewn upon what foundation we believe the second article of our creed; let us next consider the remaining articles—the history of Christ, as delivered in scripture, and the benefits which he procured for us—the assistance of the Holy Spirit—the remission of our sins—and everlasting life.

First, then, we believe that Christ was “conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the virgin Mary.” The manner of this miraculous conception we inquire not into. It is a point not only beyond the limits of human inquiry; but to us at least a point very unimportant. We believe just the Scripture-account of it, and assure our-

selves, that if it had concerned us, it would have been more plainly revealed.—One thing, however, we may observe on this head, that nothing is said in Scripture of paying divine honours to the virgin Mary. Those rites are totally of popish origin.

We farther believe, that Christ “suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; and that he descended into hell,”—that is, we declare our belief of the Scripture-account of the circumstances and the reality of Christ's death.

To make an action clear, it is necessary, first, to establish its date. This is usually done by ranging it under the magistrate who then presided, the time of whose government is always registered in some public record.—Thus we believe that Christ's death happened when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea. We believe also, with regard to the manner of his death, that he was crucified; that he died as really as any mortal ever did; and that he was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea †.

The “descent into hell” is undoubtedly a more obscure expression than might be wished in a creed, and was not indeed added till many ages after the creed was first composed ‡. But as creeds are human compositions, we believe this, and every other difficulty, only as consistent with Scripture. Now the sense which seems most agreeable to Scripture, is, that his soul remained till his resurrection in that place (whatever that place is) where the spirits of the blessed rest: and the expression seems to have been added, only that we may the more strongly express our belief of the reality of his death. This we do, when we express our belief of the separation of his soul and body. “He was buried,”—and “descended into hell.” The first expression relates to his body, which was laid in the grave; the second to his soul, which passed into the place of departed spirits.

We farther believe, that “on the third day he rose again from the dead.” The resurrection of Christ from the dead is a point of the utmost importance to christ-

* See Bishop Newton's Dissertations; and Bishop Hurd's Sermons on Prophecy.

† Isaiah foretold he should “make his grave with the rich.” And St. Matthew tells us, that these persons shall be as worms. Matt. xxvii. 57. Isaiah lili. 9.

‡ See Bingham's Antiquities, vol. iii. c. 3.

tians. On the certainty of Christ's resurrection depend all hopes of our own. On this article, therefore, we shall be more large.

And, in the first place, what is there in it that need shock our reason? It was a wonderful event: but is not nature full of wonderful events? When we seriously weigh the matter, is it less strange, that a grain of corn thrown into the ground should die, and rise again with new vegetation, than that a human body, in the same circumstances, should assume new life? The commonness of the former makes it familiar to us, but not in any degree less unaccountable. Are we at all more acquainted with the manner in which grain germinates, than with the manner in which a body is raised from the dead? And is it not obviously striking, that the same power which can effect the one, may effect the other also?—But analogy, though it tend to convince, is no proof. Let us proceed then to matter of fact.

That the body was dead, and safely lodged in the tomb, and afterwards conveyed out of it, was agreed on, both by those who opposed, and by those who favoured the resurrection. In the circumstances of the latter fact, they differ widely.

The disciples tell their story—a very plain and simple one—that, scarce expecting the event, notwithstanding their master had himself foretold it, they were surprised with an account that the body was gone—that they found afterwards, to their great astonishment, that their master was again alive—that they had been several times with him; and appealed for the truth of what they said to great numbers, who, as well as themselves, had seen him after his resurrection.

The chief priests, on the other side, declared the whole to be a forgery; asserting, that the plain matter of fact was, the disciples came by night, and stole the body away, while the soldiers slept.

Such a tale, unsupported by evidence, would be listened to in no court of justice. It has not even the air of probability. Can it be supposed, that the disciples, who had fled with terror when they might have rescued their master's life; would venture, in the face of an armed guard, to carry off his dead body?—Or is it more probable, that they found the whole guard asleep; when we know, that the vigilance of cen-

tinels is secured by the strictest discipline?—Besides, what advantage could arise from such an attempt? If they miscarried, it was certain ruin, both to them and their cause. If they succeeded, it is difficult to say what use they could make of their success. Unless they could have produced their dead body alive, the second error would be worse than the first. Their master's prophecy of his own resurrection was an unhappy circumstance; yet still it was wrapped in a veil of obscurity. But if his disciples endeavoured to prove its completion, it was their business to look well to the event. A detection would be such a comment upon their master's text, as would never be forgotten.—When a cause depends on falsehood, every body knows, the less it is moved the better.

This was the case of the other side. Obscurity there was wanted. If the chief priests had any proof, why did they not produce it? Why were not the disciples taken up and examined upon the fact? They never absconded. Why were they not judicially tried? Why was not the trial made public? and why were not authentic memorials of the fraud handed down to posterity; as authentic memorials were of the fact, recorded at the very time, and place, where it happened? Christianity never wanted enemies to propagate its disparagement.—But nothing of this kind was done. No proof was attempted—except indeed the testimony of men asleep. The disciples were never questioned upon the fact; and the chief priests rested satisfied with spreading an inconsistent rumour among the people, impressed merely by their own authority.

Whatever records of heathen origin remain, evince the truth of the resurrection. One is very remarkable. Pontius Pilate sent the emperor Tiberius a relation of the death and resurrection of Christ; which were recorded at Rome, as usual, among other provincial matters. This intelligence made so great an impression, it seems, upon the emperor, that he referred it to the senate, whether Jesus Christ of Judea should not be taken into the number of the Roman gods?—Our belief of this fact is chiefly founded upon the testimony of Justin Martyr, and Tertullian, two learned heathens, in the age succeeding Christ, who became christians from this very evidence, among others, in favour of christianity.

Christianity. In their apologies *, still extant, one of which was made to the senate of Rome, the other to a Roman governor, they both appeal to these records of Pontius Pilate, as then generally known; which we cannot conceive such able apologists would have done, if no such records had ever existed †.

Having seen what was of old objected to the resurrection of Christ, it may be proper also to see the objections of modern disbelievers.

And, first, we have the stale objection, that nothing is more common among the propagators of every new religion, than to delude their ignorant proselytes with idle stories. What a variety of inconsistent tales did the votaries of heathenism believe! What absurdities are adopted into the Mahometan creed! To what strange facts do the vulgar papists give credit! And can we suppose better of the resurrection of Christ, than that it was one of those pious frauds, intended merely to impose upon the people, and advance the credit of the new sect?

This is just as easily said, as that his disciples stole him away, while the guard slept. Both are assertions without proof.

Others have objected Christ's partial discovery of himself, after his resurrection. If he had boldly shewn himself to the chief priests; or publicly to all the people; we might have had a more rational foundation for our belief. But as he had only for his witnesses, upon this occasion, a few of his chosen companions, the thing has certainly a more secret appearance than might be wished.

This insinuation is founded upon a passage in the Acts of the Apostles, in which it is said, that "God shewed him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God." The question is, what is meant by witnesses chosen before of God? Certainly nothing more than persons expressly, and by particular designation, intended to be the witnesses of this event. Others might see him if they

pleased: but these were not the people, to whom God shewed him openly: this particular designation was confined to the "chosen witnesses."—And is there any thing more in this, than we see daily in all legal proceedings? Does not every body wish to have the fact, about which he is concerned, authenticated by indubitable records; or by living testimony, if it can be had? Do we not procure the hands of witnesses, appointed to this purpose, in all our deeds and writings?—Let us not, however, answer the objection by an arbitrary explanation of the text; but let us compare this explanation with the matter of fact.

On the morning of the resurrection, the apostles, who ran to the sepulchre to make themselves acquainted with what they had heard, received a message from their master, injoining them to meet him in Galilee. It does not appear, that this message was conveyed with any secrecy; it is rather probable it was not; and that the disciples told it to as many as they met. The women, it is expressly said, told it "to the eleven, and all the rest." Who the rest were, does not appear: but it is plain, from the sequel, that the thing was generally known; and that as many as chose either to satisfy their faith, or gratify their curiosity, repaired for that purpose to Galilee. And thus we find St. Peter making a distinction between the voluntary and the chosen witnesses—between those "who had accompanied with the apostles all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them, from his baptism till his ascension," and those who "were ordained to be the witnesses of his resurrection †."

St. Paul goes farther, and in express words tells us, "that Christ was seen || "after his resurrection of above five hundred brethren at once:" and it is probable, from the expression, "at once," that he was seen, at different times, by many more.

If then Christ thus appeared in Galilee to as many as chose to see him; or even

* Just. Mart. Apol. ad Anton. P.—Tertull. Apol. cap. 15.

† The acts of Pilate, as they are called, are often treated with contempt; for no reason, that I know, I never met with any thing against them of more authority than a sneer. Probable they certainly were; and a bare probability, when nothing opposes it, has its weight. But here the probability is strengthened by so small degree of positive evidence; which, if the reader wishes to see collected in one point of view, I refer him to the article of "Christ's suffering under Pontius Pilate," in Bishop Pearson's exposition of the Creed.

Among other authorities, that of the learned commentator on Eusebius, is worth remarking: "Fuerunt genuina Pilati acta; ad quæ provocabant primi christiani, tanquam ad certissima fidei monumenta."

‡ Acts i. 21.

|| 1 Cor. xv.

if he appeared only to five hundred people, of whom St. Paul tells us the greatest part were still alive, when he wrote this epistle, there can surely be no reasonable cause of offence at his appearing, besides these, to a few of his chosen companions, who attended by express appointment, as persons designed to record the event.

In fact, if the same method be pursued in this inquiry, which is usual in all others, the evidence of these chosen companions is all that is necessary. Here are twelve men produced (in general three or four men are thought sufficient) on whose evidence the fact depends. Are they competent witnesses? Have they those marks about them, which characterise men of integrity? Can they be challenged on any one ground of rational exception? If not, their evidence is as strictly legal, as full, and as satisfactory, as any reasonable man can require.—But in this great cause, we see the evidence is carried still farther. Here are five hundred persons waiting without, ready to add their testimony, if any one should require it, to what has already been more than legally proved. So that the argument even addresses itself to that absurd distinction, which we often find in the cavils of infidelity; between *rem certam*, and *rem certissimam*.

Upon the whole, then, we may affirm boldly, that this great event of the resurrection of Christ is founded upon evidence equal to the importance of it. If we expect still more, our answer is upon record: "If ye believe not Moses and the prophets," God's ordinary means of salvation, "neither will ye be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."—There must be bounds in all human evidence; and he who will believe nothing, unless he have every possible mode of proof, must be an infidel in almost every transaction of life. With such persons there is no reasoning. They who are not satisfied, because Christ did not appear in open parade at Jerusalem; would farther have asked, if he had appeared in the manner they expected, why did he not appear to every nation upon earth? Or, perhaps, why he did not shew himself to every individual?

To these objections may be added a scruple, taken from a passage of Scripture, in which it is said, that "Christ should lie three days and three nights in

the heart of the earth?" whereas, in fact, he only lay two nights, one whole day, and a part of two others,

But no figure in speech is more common than that of putting a part for the whole. In the Hebrew language perhaps this licence is more admissible, than in any other. A day and a night complete one whole day: and as our Saviour lay in the ground a part of every one of these three portions of time, he might be said, by an easy liberty of speech, to have lain the whole.

Gilpin.

§ 195. *Creed continued—Christ's Ascension.—Belief in the Holy Ghost.*

We believe farther, that Christ "ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God."

Christ's ascension into heaven rests on the same kind of proof, as his resurrection. Both of them are events, which the apostles were "ordained to witness." But though their testimony in this case, as well as in the resurrection, is certainly the most legal, and authentic proof, and fully sufficient for any reasonable man; yet this does not exclude the voluntary testimony of others. It is evident, that the apostles were not the sole eye-witnesses of this event: for when St. Peter called together the first assembly of the church to chuse a successor to Judas Iscariot, he tells them, they must necessarily chuse one, out of those men, who had been witnesses of all that Christ did, from his baptism "till his ascension:" and we find, there were in that meeting an hundred and twenty persons*, thus qualified.

Be it however as it will, if this article should rest on a less formal proof, than the resurrection, it is of no great consequence: for if the resurrection be fully proved, nobody can well deny the ascension. If the testimony of the evangelists be allowed to prove the one; their word may be taken to establish the other.

With regard to "the right hand of God," it is a scriptural expression used merely in conformity to our gross conceptions; and is not intended to imply any distinction of parts, but merely the idea of pre-eminence.

We believe farther, that "Christ shall come to judge the quick and the dead."

This article contains the most serious

* See Acts i. 15.

truth, that ever was revealed to mankind. In part it was an article of the heathen creed. To unenlightened nature it seemed probable, that, as we had reason given us for a guide, we should hereafter be accountable for its abuse: and the poets, who were the prophets of early days, and durst deliver those truths under the veil of fable, which the philosopher kept more to himself, give us many traits of the popular belief on this subject*. But the gospel alone threw a full light upon this awful truth.

In examining this great article, the curiosity of human nature, ever delighting to explore unbeaten regions, hath often been tempted, beyond its limits, into fruitless inquiries; scrutinizing the time of this event; and settling, with vain precision, the circumstances of it. All curiosity of this kind is idle at least, if not presumptuous. When the Almighty hath thrown a veil over any part of his dispensation, it is the folly of man to endeavour to draw it aside.

Let us then leave all fruitless inquiries about this great event; and employ our thoughts chiefly upon such circumstances of it as most concern us.—Let us animate our hopes with the soothing reflection, that we have our sentence, in a manner, in our own power,—that the same gracious gospel, which directs our lives, shall direct the judgment we receive,—that the same gracious person shall be our judge, who died for our sins—and that his goodness, we are assured, will still operate towards us; and make the kindest allowances for all our infirmities.

But lest our hopes should be too buoyant, let us consider, on the other hand, what an awful detail against us will then appear. The subject of that grand inquiry will be all our transgressions of known duty—all our omissions of knowing better—our secret intentions—our indulged evil thoughts—the bad motives, which often accompany our most plausible actions—and we are told, even our idle words.—“He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”—Then shall it be known, whether we have answered the great ends of life?—Whether we have made this world subservient to a better?—Whether we have prepared ourselves for a state of happiness in heaven, by endeavouring to communicate happiness to our fellow creatures upon earth? Whether we

have restrained our appetites, and passions; and reduced them within the bounds of reason and religion? Or, whether we have given ourselves up to pleasure, gain, or ambition; and formed such attachments to this world, as fit us for nothing else; and leave us no hopes either of gaining, or of enjoying a better? It will be happy for us, if on all these heads of inquiry, we can answer without dismay.—Worldly distinctions, we know, will then be of no avail. The proudest of them will be then confounded. “Naked came we into the world; and naked must we return.” We can carry nothing beyond the grave, but our virtues, and our vices.

I shall conclude what hath been said on the last judgment with a collection of passages on this head from Scripture; where only our ideas of it can be obtained. And though most of these passages are figurative; yet as figures are intended to illustrate realities, and are indeed the only illustrations of which this subject is capable, we may take it for granted, that these figurative expressions are intended to convey a just idea of the truth.—With a view to make the more impression upon you, I shall place these passages in a regular series, though collected from various parts.

“The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with his holy angels—The trumpet shall sound; and all that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and come forth—Then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and all nations shall be gathered before him—the books shall be opened; and men shall be judged according to their works.—They who have sinned without law, shall perish (that is, be judged) without law; and they who have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law.—Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.—Then shall he say to them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you. And to them on his left, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.—Then shall the righteous shine forth in the presence of their Father; while the wicked shall go into everlasting punishment; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.—What manner of persons ought we then to be in all holy conversation, and godliness? Looking for, and hastening unto, the day of our

* See particularly the 6th Book of Virgil's *Æneid*.

Lord; when the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.—Wherefore, beloved, seeing that we look for such things, let us be diligent, that we may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless; that each of us may receive that blessed sentence “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a little, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

We believe, farther, in “the Holy Ghost;” that is, we believe every thing which the Scriptures tell us of the Holy Spirit of God.—We inquire not into the nature of its union with the Godhead. We take it for granted, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, have some kind of union, and some kind of distinction; because both this union and this distinction are plainly pointed out in Scripture; but how they exist we inquire not; concluding here, as in other points of difficulty, that if a clearer information had been necessary, it would have been afforded.

With regard to the operations of the Holy Spirit of God, (besides which, little more on this head is revealed) we believe, that it directed the apostles, and enabled them to propagate the gospel—and that it will assist all good men in the conscientious discharge of a pious life.

The Scripture doctrine with regard to the assistance we receive from the Holy Spirit of God (which is the most essential part of this article) is briefly this:

Our best endeavours are insufficient. We are unprofitable servants, after all; and cannot please God, unless sanctified, and assisted by his Holy Spirit. Hence the life of a good man hath been sometimes called a standing miracle; something beyond the common course of nature. To attain any degree of goodness, we must be supernaturally assisted.

At the same time, we are assured of this assistance, if we strive to obtain it by fervent prayer, and a pious life. If we trust in ourselves, we shall fail. If we trust in God without doing all we can ourselves, we shall fail likewise. And if we continue obstinate in our perverseness, we may at length totally incapacitate ourselves from being the temples of the Holy Ghost.

And indeed what is there in all this, which common life does not daily illustrate? Is any thing more common, than for the intellect of one man to assist that of another? Is not the whole scheme of

education an infusion of knowledge and virtue not our own? Is it not evident too, that nothing of this kind can be communicated without application on the part of the learner? Are not the efforts of the teacher in a manner necessarily proportioned to this application? If the learner becomes languid in his pursuits, are not the endeavours of the teacher of course discouraged? And will they not at length wholly fail, if it be found in the end they answer no purpose?—In a manner analogous to this, the Holy Spirit of God co-operates with the endeavours of man. Our endeavours are necessary to obtain God’s assistance: and the more earnestly these endeavours are exerted, the measure of this grace will of course be greater. But, on the other hand, if these endeavours languish, the assistance of Heaven will lessen in proportion; and if we behave with obstinate perverseness, it will by degrees wholly fail. It will not always strive with man; but will leave him a melancholy prey to his own vicious inclinations.

As to the manner, in which this spiritual assistance is conveyed, we make no inquiry. We can as little comprehend it, as we can the action of our souls upon our bodies. We are sensible, that our souls do act upon our bodies; and it is a belief equally consonant to reason, that the divine influence may act upon our souls. The advocate for natural religion need not be reminded, that among the heathens a divine influence was a received opinion. The priests of every oracle were supposed to be inspired by their gods; and the heroes of antiquity were universally believed to act under the influence of a supernatural assistance; by which it was conceived they performed actions beyond human power.—This shews, at least, that there is nothing in this doctrine repugnant to reason.

Gilpin.

§ 156. *Creed continued.—The Holy Catholic Church, &c.*

We believe, farther, in the “holy catholic church,” and the “communion of saints.”

“I believe in the holy catholic church,” is certainly a very obscure expression to a protestant; as it is very capable of a popish construction, implying our trust in the infallibility of the church; whereas we attribute infallibility to no church upon earth. The most obvious sense, therefore,

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in which it can be considered as a protestant article of our belief, is this, that we call no particular society of christians a holy catholic church; but believe, that all true and sincere christians of whatever communion, or particular opinion, shall be the objects of God's mercy. The patriarchal covenant was confined to a few. The Jewish church stood also on a very narrow basis. But the christian church, we believe, is truly catholic: its gracious offers are made to all mankind; and God through Christ will take out of every nation such as shall be saved.

The "communion of saints," is an expression equally obscure: and whatever might have been the original meaning of it, it certainly does not resolve itself into a very obvious one to us. If we say we mean by it, that good christians living together on earth, should exercise all offices of charity among themselves, no one will contradict the article; but many perhaps may ask, Why is it made an article of faith? It relates not so much to faith, as to practice: and the ten commandments might just as well be introduced as articles of our belief.

To this I can only suggest, that it may have a place among the articles of our creed, as a test of our enlarged ideas of christianity, and as opposed to the narrow-mindedness of some christians, who harbour very uncharitable opinions against all who are not of their own church; and scruple not to shew their opinions by uncharitable actions. The papists particularly deny salvation to any but those of their own communion, and persecute those of other persuasions where they have the power.—In opposition to this, we profess our belief of the great christian law of charity. We believe we ought to think charitably of good christians of all denominations; and ought to practise a free and unrestrained communion of charitable offices towards them.

In this light the second part of the article depends upon the first. By the "holy catholic church," we mean all sincere christians, of whatever church, or peculiarity of opinion; and by "the communion

of saints," a kind and charitable behaviour towards them.

Though it is probable this was not the original meaning of the article, yet as the reformers of the liturgy did not think it proper to make an alteration, we are led to seek such a sense as appears most consistent with scripture.—We are assured, that this article, as well as the "descent into hell," is not of the same antiquity as the rest of the creed*.

We profess our belief farther in the "forgiveness of sins."—The Scripture-doctrine of sin, and of the guilt, which arises from it, is this:

Man was originally created in a state of innocence, yet liable to fall. Had he persevered in his obedience, he might have enjoyed that happiness, which is the consequence of perfect virtue. But when this happy state was lost, his passions and appetites became disordered, and prone to evil. Since that time we have all been, more or less, involved in sin, and are all therefore, in the Scripture-language, "under the curse;" that is, we are naturally in a state of unpardoned guilt.

In this mournful exigence, what was to be done? In a state of nature, it is true, we might be sorry for our sins. Nature too might dictate repentance. But sorrow and repentance, though they may put us on our guard for the future, can make no atonement for sins already committed. A resolution to run no more into debt may make us cautious; but can never discharge a debt already contracted†.

In this distress of nature, Jesus Christ came into the world. He threw a light upon the gloom that surrounded us.—He shewed us, that in this world we were lost—that the law of nature could not save us—that the tenor of that law was perfect obedience, with which we could not comply—but that God—thru' his mediation, offered us a method of regaining happiness—that he came to make that atonement for us, which we could not make for ourselves—and to redeem us from that guilt, which would otherwise overwhelm us—that faith and obedience were, on our parts, the conditions required in this gracious co-

* See Bingham's Antiquities, vol. iv. chap. 3.

† Thus Mr. Jenyns expresses the same thing: "The punishment of vice is a debt due to justice, which cannot be remitted without compensation: repentance can be no compensation. It may change a wicked man's dispositions, and prevent his offending for the future: but can lay no claim to pardon for what is past. If any one by profligacy and extravagance contracts a debt, repentance may make him wiser, and hinder him from running into farther distresses, but can never pay off his old bonds, for which he must be ever accountable, unless they are discharged by himself, or some other in his stead."

View of the Intern. Evid. p. 112.

venant—and that God promised us, on his, the pardon of our sins, and everlasting life—that we were first therefore to be made holy through the gospel of Christ, and then we might expect salvation through his death: “Us, who were dead in trespasses and sins, would he quicken. Christ would redeem us from the curse of the law. By grace we should be saved thro’ faith; and that not of ourselves: it was the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

Gilpin.

§ 157. *Creed continued—Resurrection of the Body.*

We believe farther, “in the resurrection of the body.”—This article pre-supposes our belief in the immortality of the soul.

What that principle of life is which we call the soul; how it is distinguished from mere animal life; how it is connected with the body; and in what state it subsists, when its bodily functions cease; are among those indissoluble questions, with which nature every where abounds. But notwithstanding the difficulties, which attend the discussion of these questions, the truth itself hath in all ages of the world been the popular creed. Men believed their souls were immortal from their own feelings, so impressed with an expectation of immortality—from observing the progressive state of the soul, capable, even after the body had attained its full strength, of still higher improvements both in knowledge, and in habits of virtue—from the analogy of all nature, dying and reviving in every part—from their situation here so apparently incomplete in itself; and from a variety of other topics, which the reason of man was able to suggest.—But though nature could obscurely suggest this great truth; yet Christianity alone threw a clear light upon it, and impressed it with a full degree of conviction upon our minds.

But the article before us proceeds a step farther. It not only implies the immortality of the soul; but asserts the resurrection of the body.—Nor was this doctrine wholly new to nature. In its conceptions of a future life, we always find the soul in an embodied state. It was airy indeed, and bloodless; but still it had the parts of a human body, and could perform all its operations.

In these particulars the Scripture does not gratify our curiosity. From various passages we are led to believe, that the

body shall certainly rise again: but in what manner, or of what substance, we pretend not to examine. We learn “that it is sown in corruption, and raised in incorruption; that it is sown in dishonour, and raised in glory; that it is sown a natural body, and raised a spiritual body:” from all which we gather, that whatever sameness our bodies may have, they will hereafter take a more spiritualized nature; and will not be subject to those infirmities, to which they were subject on earth. Farther on this head, it behoves us not to inquire.

Instead, therefore, of entering into any metaphysical disquisitions of identity, or any other curious points in which this deep subject might engage us, all which, as they are founded upon uncertainty, must end in doubt, it is better to draw this doctrine, as well as all others, into practical use; and the use we ought to make of it is, to pay that regard to our bodies, which is due to them—not vainly to adorn—not luxuriously to pamper them; but to keep them as much as possible from the pollutions of the world; and to lay them down in the grave undefiled, there to be sealed up in expectation of a blessed resurrection.

Lastly, we believe “in the life everlasting;” in which article we express our faith in the eternity of a future state of rewards and punishments.

This article is nearly related to the last, and is involved in the same obscurity. In what the reward of the virtuous will consist, after death, our reason gives us no information. Conjecture indeed it will, in a matter which so nearly concerns us; and it hath conjectured in all ages, but information it hath none, except from the word of God; and even there, our limited capacities can receive it only in general and figurative expressions. We are told, “there will then reign fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore—that the righteous shall have an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away—where they shall shine forth, as the sun, in the presence of their father—where error, and sin, and misery shall be no more—where shall be assembled an innumerable company of angels, the general assembly of the church, the spirits of just men made perfect—that they shall neither hunger, nor thirst any more—that all tears shall be wiped from their eyes—that there shall be neither death, nor sorrow, nor pain.”

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From

From these, and such expressions as these, though we cannot collect the entire nature of a future state of happiness, yet we can easily gather a few circumstances, which must of course attend it; as, that it will be very great—that it will last for ever—that it will be of a nature entirely different from the happiness of this world—that, as in this world, our passions and appetites prevail; in the next, reason and virtue will have the superiority—"hunger and thirst, tears and sorrow," we read, "will be no more"—that is, all uneasy passions and appetites will then be annihilated—all vain fears will be then removed—all anxious and intruding cares—and we shall feel ourselves compleat and perfect; and our happiness, not dependent, as here, upon a thousand precarious circumstances, both within and without ourselves, but consistent, uniform, and stable.

On the other hand, we pretend not to inquire in what the punishment of the wicked consists. In the Scripture we find many expressions, from which we gather, that it will be very great. It is there called "an everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels—where the worm dieth not, and the fire is never quenched—where shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth—where the wicked shall drink of the wrath of God, poured without mixture into the cup of his indignation—where they shall have no rest, neither by day nor night."

Though it becomes us certainly to put our interpretations with the greatest caution and humility upon such passages as these; yet "the worm that never dieth," and "the fire that is never quenched," are strong expressions, and hardly to be evaded by any refinements of verbal criticism. Let the deist bravely argue down his fears, by demonstrating the absurdity of consuming a spirit in material fire. Let him fully explain the nature of future punishment: and convince us, that where it cannot reform, it must be unjust.—But let us, with more modesty, lay our hands humbly upon our breasts, confess our ignorance;

revere the appointments of God, whatever they may be; and prepare to meet them with holy hope, and trembling joy, and awful submission to his righteous will.

To the unenlightened heathen the eternity of future punishments appeared no such unreasonable doctrine. Their state of the damned was of eternal duration. A vulture for ever tore those entrails, which were for ever renewed *.

Of one thing, however, we may be well assured (which may set us entirely at rest in all our enquiries on this deep subject, that every thing will, in the end, be right—that a just and merciful God must act agreeably to justice and mercy—and that the first of these attributes will most assuredly be tempered with the latter.

From the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, the great and most convincing practical truth which arises, is, that we cannot exert too much pains in qualifying ourselves for the happiness of a future world. As this happiness will last for ever, how beneficial will be the exchange—this world, "which is but for a moment, for that everlasting weight of glory which fadeth not away!"

Vice, on the other hand, receives the greatest discouragement from this doctrine, as every sin we commit in this world may be considered as an addition to an everlasting account in the next. *Gilpin.*

§ 158. On the Ten Commandments.

Having considered the articles of our faith, we proceed to the rules of practice. These, we know, are of such importance, that, let our faith be what it will, unless it influence our lives, it is of no value. At the same time, if it be what it ought to be, it will certainly have this influence.

On this head, the ten commandments are first placed before us; from which the composers of the catechism, as well as many other divines, have drawn a compleat system of christian duties. But this is perhaps rather too much †. Both Mo-

* Rostroque immanis vultur obunco
Immortale jecur tundens, secundaque pennis
Viscera
Sedet, æternumque sedebit
Inferx Theseus

Æn. vi. 596.

Ib. 616.

† In the fourth volume of Bishop Warburton's commentary on Pope's works, in the second satire of Dr. Donne, are these lines:

Of whose strange crimes no canonist can tell
In which commandment's large contents they dwell.

"The original" says the bishop, "is more humorous:

In which commandment's large receipt they dwell;

ses, in the law, and Christ in the gospel, seem to have enlarged greatly on morals: and each of them, especially the latter, to have added many practical rules, which do not obviously fall under any of the commandments.

But though we cannot call the decalogue a complete rule of duty, we accept it with the utmost reverence, as the first great written law that ever God communicated to man. We consider it as an eternal monument, inscribed by the finger of God himself, with a few strong, indelible characters; not defining the minutiae of morals; but injoining those great duties only, which have the most particular influence upon the happiness of society; and prohibiting those enormous crimes, which are the greatest sources of its distress.

The ten commandments are divided into two parts, from their being originally written upon two tables. From hence one table is supposed to contain our duty to God; the other our duty to man. But this seems to be an unauthorized division; and hath a tendency to a verbal mistake; as if some duties were owing to God; and others to man: whereas in fact we know that all duties are equally owing to God.—However, if we avoid this misconception, the division into our duty to God, and our duty to man, may be a convenient one.—The four first commandments are contained in the first table: the remaining six in the second.

At the head of them stands a prohibition to acknowledge more than one God.

The second commandment bears a near relation to the first. The former forbids polytheism; the latter idolatry: and with this belief, and practice, which generally accompanied each other, all the nations of the earth were tainted, when these commandments were given: especially those nations by whom the Jews were surrounded.

The third commandment enjoins reverence to God's name. This is a strong religious restraint in private life; and as a solemn oath is the strictest obligation among men, nothing can be of greater service to society, than to hold it in general respect.

The fourth commands the observance

of the sabbath; as one of the best means of preserving a sense of God, and of religion in the minds of men.

The second table begins with injoining obedience to parents; a duty in a peculiar manner adapted to the Jewish state, before any regular government was erected. The temporal promise, which guards it, and which can relate only to the Jews, may either mean a promise of long life to each individual, who observed the precept: or, of stability to the whole nation upon the general observance of it: which is perhaps a better interpretation.

The five next commandments are prohibitions of the most capital crimes, which pollute the heart of man, and injure the peace of society.

The first of them forbids murder, which is the greatest injury that one man can do another; as of all crimes the damage in this is the most irreparable.

The seventh commandment forbids adultery. The black infidelity, and injury which accompany this crime; the confusion in families, which often succeeds it; and the general tendency it hath to destroy all the domestic happiness of society, stain it with a very high degree of guilt.

The security of our property is the object of the eighth commandment.

The security of our characters, is the object of the ninth.

The tenth restrains us not only from the actual commission of sin; but from those bad inclinations, which give it birth.

After the commandments follows a commentary upon them, intitled, "our duty to God," and "our duty to our neighbour;" the latter of which might more properly be intitled, "Our duty to our neighbour and ourselves."—These seem intended as an explanation of the commandments upon Christian principles; with the addition of other duties, which do not properly fall under any of them. On these we shall be more large.

The first part of our duty to God, is, "to believe in him;" which is the foundation of all religion, and therefore offers itself first to our consideration. But this great point hath been already considered.

The next branch of our duty to God, is to fear him. The fear of God is impressed equally upon the righteous man,

"as if the ten commandments were so wide, as to stand ready to receive every thing, which either the law of nature, or the gospel commands. A just ridicule on those practical commentators, as they are called, who include all moral and religious duties within them."

and the sinner. But the fear of the sinner consists only in the dread of punishment. It is the necessary consequence of guilt; and is not that fear, which we consider as a duty. The fear of God here meant, consists in that reverential awe, that constant apprehension of his presence, which secures us from offending him.—When we are before our superiors, we naturally feel a respect, which prevents our doing any thing indecent in their sight. Such (only in a higher degree) should be our reverence of God, in whose sight, we know, we always stand. If a sense of the divine presence hath such an influence over us, as to check the bad tendency of our thoughts, words, and actions; we may properly be said to be impressed with the fear of God.—If not, we neglect one of the best means of checking vice, which the whole circle of religious restraint affords.

Some people go a step farther; and say, that as every degree of light behaviour, though short of an indecency, is improper before our superiors; so is it likewise in the presence of Almighty God, who is so much superior to every thing that can be called great on earth.

But this is the language of superstition. Mirth, within the bounds of innocence, cannot be offensive to God. He is offended only with vice. Vice, in the lowest degree, is hateful to him: but a formal set behaviour can be necessary only to preserve human distinctions.

The next duty to God is that of love, which is founded upon his goodness to his creatures. Even this world, mixed as it is with evil, exhibits various marks of the goodness of the Deity. Most men indeed place their affections too much upon it, and rate it at too high a value: but in the opinion even of wise men, it deserves some estimation. The acquisition of knowledge, in all its branches; the intercourse of society; the contemplation of the wonderful works of God, and all the beautiful scenes of nature; nay, even the low inclinations of animal life, when indulged with sobriety and moderation, furnish various modes of pleasure and enjoyment.

Let this world however go for little. In contemplating a future life, the enjoyments of this are lost. It is in the contemplation of futurity, that the christian views the goodness of God in the fullest light. When he sees the Deity engaging himself by covenant to make our short abode here a preparation for our eternal happiness

hereafter—when he is assured that this happiness is not only eternal, but of the purest and most perfect kind—when he sees God, as a father, opening all his stores of love and kindness, to bring back to himself a race of creatures fallen from their original perfection, and totally lost through their own folly, perverseness, and wickedness; then it is that the evils of life seem as atoms in the sun-beam; the divine nature appears overflowing with goodness to mankind, and calls forth every exertion of our gratitude and love.

That the enjoyments of a future state; in whatever those enjoyments consist, are the gift of God, is sufficiently obvious: but with regard to the government of this world, there is often among men a sort of infidelity, which ascribes all events to their own prudence and industry. Things appear to run in a stated course; and the finger of God, which acts unseen, is never supposed.

And, no doubt, our own industry and prudence have a great share in procuring for us the blessings of life. God hath annexed them as the reward of such exertions. But can we suppose, that such exertions will be of any service to us, unless the providence of God throw opportunities in our way? All the means of worldly happiness are surely no other than the means of his government. Moses saw among the Jews a kind of infidelity like this, when he forbade the people to say in their hearts, “My power, and the might of my hands hath gotten me this wealth:” whereas, he adds, they ought to remember, “That it is the Lord who giveth power to get wealth.”

Others again have objected to the goodness of God, his permission of evil. A good God, say they, would have prevented it; and have placed his creatures in a situation beyond the distresses of life.

With regard to man, there seems to be no great difficulty in this matter. It is enough, surely, that God has put the means of comfort in our power. In the natural world, he hath given us remedies against hunger, cold, and disease; and in the moral world, against the mischief of sin. Even death itself, the last great evil, he hath shewn us how we may change into the most consummate blessing. A state of trial, therefore, and a future world, seem easily to set things to rights on this head.

The misery of the brute creation is indeed more unaccountable. But have we

not

not the modesty to suppose, that this difficulty may be owing to our ignorance? And that on the strength of what we know of the wisdom of God, we may venture to trust him for those parts which we cannot comprehend?

One truth, after all, is very apparent, that if we should argue ourselves into atheism, by the untractableness of these subjects, we should be so far from getting rid of our difficulties, that, if we reason justly, ten thousand greater would arise, either from considering the world under no ruler, or under one of our own imagining.

There remains one farther consideration with regard to the love of God, and that is, the measure of it. We are told we ought to love him "with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength." These are strong expressions, and seem to imply a greater warmth of affection, than many people may perhaps find they can exert. The affections of some are naturally cool, and little excited by any objects. The guilty person, is he, whose affections are warm in every thing but religion.—The obvious meaning therefore of the expression is, that whether our affections are cool or warm, we should make God our chief good—that we should set our affections more upon him, than upon any thing else—and that, for his sake, and for the sake of his laws, we should be ready to resign every thing we have, and even life itself. So that the words seem nearly of the same import with those of the apostle, "Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth." *Gilpin,*

§ 159. *Worship and Honour of God.*

Our next duty to God is, to worship him, to give him thanks, to put our whole trust in him, and to call upon him.

Since the observance of the sabbath is founded upon many wise and just reasons, what have they to answer for, who not only neglect this institution themselves, but bring it by their example into contempt with others? I speak not to those who make it a day of common diversion; who, laying aside all decency, and breaking through all civil and religious regulations; spend it in the most licentious amusements: such people are past all reproof: but I speak to those, who in other things profess themselves to be serious people; and, one might hope, would act right, when they were convinced what was so.

But our prayers, whether in public, or in private, are only an idle parade, unless we put our trust in God.

By putting our trust in God, is meant depending upon him, as our happiness, and our refuge.

Human nature is always endeavouring either to remove pain; or, if ease be obtained, to acquire happiness. And those things are certainly the most eligible, which in these respects are the most effectual. The world, it is true, makes us flattering promises: but who can say that it will keep them? We consist of two parts, a body, and a soul. Both of these want the means of happiness, as well as the removal of evil. But the world cannot even afford them to the body. Its means of happiness, to those who depend upon them as such, are, in a thousand instances, unsatisfying. Even, at best, they will fail us in the end. While pain, diseases, and death, shew us, that the world can afford no refuge against bodily distress. And if it cannot afford the means of happiness, and of security, to the body, how much less can we suppose it able to afford them to the soul?

Nothing then, we see, in this world, is a sufficient foundation for trust: nor indeed can any thing be but Almighty God, who affords us the only means of happiness, and is our only real refuge in distress. On him, the more we trust, the greater we shall feel our security; and that man who has, on just religious motives, confirmed in himself this trust, wants nothing else to secure his happiness. The world may wear what aspect it will: it is not on it that he depends. As far as prudence goes, he endeavours to avoid the evils of life; but when they fall to his share (as sooner or later we must all share them) he resigns himself into the hands of that God who made him, and who knows best how to dispose of him. On him he thoroughly depends, and with him he has a constant intercourse by prayer; trusting, that whatever happens is agreeable to that just government, which God has established: and that, of consequence, it must be best.

We are enjoined next "to honour God's holy name."

The name of God is accompanied with such ideas of greatness and reverence, that it should never pass our lips without suggesting those ideas. Indeed it should never be mentioned, but with a kind of awful hesitation, and on the most solemn occasions;

tations; either in serious discourse, or, when we invoke God in prayer, or when we swear by his name.

In this last light we are here particularly enjoined to honour the name of God. A solemn oath is an appeal to God himself; and is intitled to our utmost respect, were it only in a political light; as in all human concerns it is the strongest test of veracity; and has been approved as such by the wisdom of all nations.

Some religionists have disapproved the use of oaths, under the idea of prophane-ness. The language of the sacred writers conveys a different idea. One of them says, "An oath for confirmation is an end of all strife:" another, "I take God for record upon my soul:" and a third, "God is my witness."

To the use of oaths, others have objected, that they are nugatory. The good man will speak the truth without an oath; and the bad man cannot be held by one. And this would be true, if mankind were divided into good and bad: but as they are generally of a mixed character, we may well suppose, that many would venture a simple falsehood, who would yet be startled at the idea of perjury*.

As an oath therefore taken in a solemn manner, and on a proper occasion, may be considered as one of the highest acts of religion; so perjury, or false swearing, is certainly one of the highest acts of impiety; and the greatest dishonour we can possibly shew to the name of God. It is, in effect, either denying our belief in a God, or his power to punish. Other crimes wish to escape the notice of Heaven; this is daring the Almighty to his face.

After perjury, the name of God is most dishonoured by the horrid practice of cursing. Its effects in society, it is true, are not so mischievous as those of perjury; nor is it so deliberate an act: but yet it conveys a still more horrid idea. Indeed, if there be one wicked practice more peculiarly diabolical, than another, it is this: for no employment can be conceived more suitable to infernal spirits, than that of spending their rage and impotence in curses, and execrations. If this shocking vice were not so dreadfully familiar to our ears, it could not fail to strike us with the utmost horror.

We next consider common swearing; a sin so universally practised, that one would imagine some great advantage, in the way either of pleasure or profit, attended it. The wages of iniquity afford some temptation: but to commit sin without any wages, is a strange species of insatiation. —May we then ask the common swearer, what the advantages are, which arise from this practice?

It will be difficult to point out one. — Perhaps it may be said, that it adds strength to an affirmation. But if a man commonly strengthen his affirmations in this way, we may venture to assert, that the practice will tend rather to lessen, than confirm his credit. It shews plainly what he himself thinks of his own veracity. We never prop a building till it becomes ruinous.

Some forward youth may think, that an oath adds an air and spirit to his discourse; that it is manly and important; and gives him consequence. We may whisper one secret in his ear, which he may be assured is a truth—These airs of manliness give him consequence with those only, whose commendation is disgrace: others he only convinces, at how early an age he wishes to be thought profligate.

Perhaps he may imagine, that an oath gives force and terror to his threatenings—In this he may be right; and the more horribly wicked he grows, the greater object of terror he may make himself. On this plan, the devil affords him a complete pattern for imitation.

Paltry as these apologies are, I should suppose, the practice of common swearing has little more to say for itself.—Those however, who can argue in favour of this sin, I should fear, there is little chance to reclaim.—But it is probable, that the greater part of such as are addicted to it, act rather from habit, than principle. To deter such persons from indulging so pernicious a habit, and to shew them, that it is worth their while to be at some pains to conquer it, let us now see what arguments may be produced on the other side.

In the first place, common swearing leads to perjury. He who is addicted to swear on every trifling occasion, cannot but often, I had almost said unavoidably, give the sanction of an oath to an untruth. And though I should hope such perjury is not a sin of so heinous a nature, as what, in

* They who attend our courts of justice, often see instances among the common people of their asserting soundly what they will either refuse to swear; or, when sworn, will not assert.

judicial matters, is called wilful and corrupt; yet it is certainly stained with a very great degree of guilt.

But secondly, common swearing is a large stride towards wilful and corrupt perjury, inasmuch as it makes a solemn oath to be received with less reverence. If nobody dared to take an oath, but on proper occasions, an oath would be received with respect; but when we are accustomed to hear swearing the common language of our streets, it is no wonder that people make light of oaths on every occasion; and that judicial, commercial, and official oaths, are all treated with so much indifference.

Thirdly, common swearing may be considered as an act of great irreverence to God; and as such, implying also a great indifference to religion. If it would disgrace a chief magistrate to suffer appeals on every trifling, or ludicrous occasion; we may at least think it as disrespectful to the Almighty.—If we lose our reverence for God, it is impossible we can retain it for his laws. You scarce remember a common swearer, who was in other respects an exact christian.

But, above all, we should be deterred from common swearing by the positive command of our Saviour, which is founded unquestionably upon the wickedness of the practice: "You have heard," saith Christ, "that it hath been said by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thyself: but I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne, neither by the earth, for it is his footstool: but let your communication" (that is, your ordinary conversation) "be yea, yea, nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."—St. James also, with great emphasis pressing his master's words, says, "Above all things, my brethren, swear not; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay, lest you fall into condemnation."

I shall just add, before I conclude this subject, that two things are to be avoided, which are very nearly allied to swearing.

The first is, the use of light exclamations, and invocations upon God, on every trivial occasion. We cannot have much reverence for God himself, when we treat his name in so familiar a manner; and may

assure ourselves, that we are indulging a practice, which must weaken impressions, that ought to be preserved as strong as possible.

Secondly, such light expressions, and wanton phrases, as sound like swearing, are to be avoided; and are often therefore indulged by silly people, for the sake of the sound; who think (if they think at all) that they add to their discourse the spirit of swearing without the guilt of it. Such people had better lay aside, together with swearing, every appearance of it. These appearances may both offend, and mislead others; and with regard to themselves, may end in realities. At least, they shew an inclination to swearing: and an inclination to vice indulged, is really vice.

Gilpin.

§ 160. *Honour due to God's Word—what it is to serve God truly, &c.*

As we are enjoined to honour God's holy name, so are we enjoined also "to honour his holy word."

By God's holy word we mean, the Old Testament and the New.

The books of the Old Testament open with the earliest accounts of time, earlier than any human records reach; and yet, in many instances, they are strengthened by human records. The heathen mythology is often grounded upon remnants of the sacred story, and many of the Bible events are recorded, however imperfectly, in prophane history. The very face of nature bears witness to the deluge.

In the history of the patriarchs is exhibited a most beautiful picture of the simplicity of ancient manners; and of genuine nature unadorned indeed by science, but impressed strongly with a sense of religion. This gives an air of greatness and dignity to all the sentiments and actions of these exalted characters.

The patriarchal history is followed by the Jewish. Here we have the principal events of that peculiar nation, which lived under a theocracy, and was set apart to preserve and propagate the knowledge of the true God through those ages of ignorance antecedent to Christ. Here too we find those types, and representations, which the apostle to the Hebrews calls the shadows of good things to come.

To those books, which contain the le-

* See the subject very learnedly treated in one of the first chapters of Jenkins's *Reasonableness of Christianity*.

gillation and history of the Jews, succeed the prophetic writings. As the time of the promise drew still nearer, the notices of its approach became stronger. The kingdom of the Messiah, which was but obscurely shadowed by the ceremonies of the Jewish law, was marked in stronger lines by the prophets, and proclaimed in a more intelligible language. The office of the Messiah, his ministry, his life, his actions, his death, and his resurrection, are all very distinctly held out. It is true, the Jews, explaining the warm figures of the prophetic language too literally, and applying to a temporal dominion those expressions, which were intended only as descriptive of a spiritual, were offended at the meanness of Christ's appearance on earth; and would not own him for that Messiah, whom their prophets had foretold; though these very prophets, when they used a less figurative language, had described him, as he really was, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

To these books are added several others, poetical and moral, which administer much instruction, and matter of meditation to devout minds.

The New Testament contains first the simple history of Christ, as recorded in the four gospels. In this history also are delivered those excellent instructions, which our Saviour occasionally gave his disciples; the precepts and the example blended together.

To the gospels succeeds an account of the lives and actions of some of the principal apostles; together with the early state of the christian church.

The epistles of several of the apostles, particularly of St. Paul, to some of the new established churches, make another part. Our Saviour had promised to endow his disciples with power from on high to complete the great work of publishing the gospel: and in the epistles that work is completed. The truths and doctrines of the christian religion are here still more unfolded, and enforced: as the great scheme of our redemption was now finished by the death of Christ.

The sacred volume is concluded with the revelations of St. John; which are supposed to contain a prophetic description of the future state of the church. Some of these prophecies, it is thought on very good grounds, are already fulfilled; and others, which now, as sublime descriptions only, amuse the imagination, will proba-

bly, in the future ages of the church, be the objects of the understanding also.

The last part of our duty to God is, "to serve him truly all the days of our life."

"To serve God truly all the days of our life," implies two things: first, the mode of this service; and secondly, the term of it.

First, we must serve God truly. We must not rest satisfied with the outward action; but must take care that every action be founded on a proper motive. It is the motive alone that makes an action acceptable to God. The hypocrite "may fast twice in the week, and give alms of all that he possesses:" nay, he may fast the whole week, if he be able, and give all he has in alms; but if his fasts and his alms are intended as matter of ostentation only, neither the one, nor the other, is that true service which God requires. God requires the heart: he requires that an earnest desire of acting agreeably to his will, should be the general spring of our actions; and this will give even an indifferent action a value in his sight.

As we are enjoined to serve God truly, so are we enjoined to serve him "all the days of our life." As far as human frailties will permit, we should persevere in a constant tenor of obedience. That lax behaviour, which instead of making a steady progress, is continually relapsing into former errors, and running the same round of sinning and repenting, is rather the life of an irresolute sinner, than of a pious christian. Human errors, and frailties, we know, God will not treat with too severe an eye; but he who, in the general tenor of his life, does not keep advancing towards christian perfection; but suffers himself, at intervals, entirely to lose sight of his calling, cannot be really serious in his profession: he is at a great distance from serving God truly all the days of his life; and has no scriptural ground to hope much from the mercy of God.

That man, whether placed in high estate, or low, has reached the summit of human happiness, who is truly serious in the service of his great Master. The things of this world may engage, but cannot engross, his attention; its sorrows and its joys may affect, but cannot disconcert him. No man, he knows, can faithfully serve two masters. He hath hired himself to one—that great Master, whose commands he reveres, whose favour he seeks, whose displeasure alone is the real object of his fears; and

and whose rewards alone are the real objects of his hope. Every thing else is trivial in his sight. The world may soothe; or it may threaten him: he perseveres steadily in the service of his God; and in that perseverance feels his happiness every day the more established. *Gilpin.*

§ 161. *Duties owing to particular persons—duty of children to parents—respect and obedience—in what the former consists—in what the latter—succouring a parent—brotherly affection—obedience to law—founded on the advantages of society.*

From the two grand principles of “loving our neighbour as ourselves: and of doing to others as we would have them do to us,” which regulate our social intercourse in general, we proceed to those more confined duties, which arise from particular relations, connections, and stations in life.

Among these, we are first taught, as indeed the order of nature directs, to consider the great duty of children to parents.

The two points to be insisted on, are respect and obedience. Both these should naturally spring from love; to which parents have the highest claim. And indeed parents, in general, behave to their children, in a manner both to deserve and to obtain their love.

But if the kindness of the parent be not such as to work upon the affections of the child, yet still the parent has a title to respect and obedience, on the principle of duty; a principle, which the voice of nature dictates; which reason inculcates; which human laws, and human customs, all join to enforce; and which the word of God strictly commands.

The child will shew respect to his parent, by treating him, at all times, with deference. He will consult his parent's inclination, and shew a readiness, in a thousand nameless trifles, to conform himself to it. He will never peevishly contradict his parent; and when he offers a contrary opinion, he will offer it modestly. Respect will teach him also, not only to put the best colouring upon the infirmities of his parent; but even if those infirmities be great, it will soften and screen them, as much as possible, from the public eye.

Obedience goes a step further, and supposes a positive command. In things unlawful indeed, the parental authority cannot bind: but this is a case that rarely

happens. The great danger is on the other side, that children, through obstinacy or fullness, should refuse their parents' lawful commands; to the observance of all which, however inconvenient to themselves; they are tied by various motives; and above all, by the command of God, who in his sacred denunciations against sin, ranks disobedience to parents among the worst *.

They are farther bound, not only to obey the commands of their parents; but to obey them cheerfully. He does but half his duty, who does it not from his heart.

There remains still a third part of filial duty, which peculiarly belongs to children, when grown up. This the catechism calls succouring or administering to the necessities of the parent; either in the way of managing his affairs, when he is less able to manage them himself: or in supplying his wants, should he need assistance in that way. And this the child should do, on the united principles of love, duty, and gratitude. The hypocritical Jew would sometimes evade this duty, by dedicating to sacred uses what should have been expended in assisting his parent. Our Saviour sharply rebukes this perversion of duty; and gives him to understand, that no pretence of serving God can cover the neglect of assisting a parent. And if no pretence of serving God can do it, surely every other pretence must still be more unnatural.

Under this head also we may consider that attention, and love, which are due to other relations, especially that mutual affection which should subsist between brothers. The name of brother expresses the highest degree of tenderness; and is generally used in scripture, as a term of peculiar endearment, to call men to the practice of social virtue. It reminds them of every kindness, which man can shew to man. If then we ought to treat all mankind with the affection of brothers, in what light must they appear, who being really such, are ever at variance with each other; continually doing spiteful actions, and shewing, upon every occasion, not only a want of brotherly kindness, but even of common regard?

The next part of our duty is “to honour and obey the king, and all that are put in authority under him.”

By the “King, and all that are put in authority under him,” is meant the various

parts of the government we live under, of which the king is the head : and the meaning of the precept is, that we ought to live in dutiful submission to legal authority.

Government and society are united. We cannot have one without the other; and we submit to the inconveniencies, for the sake of the advantages.

The end of society is mutual safety and convenience. Without it, even safety could in no degree be obtained : the good would become a prey to the bad; nay, the very human species to the beasts of the field.

Still less could we obtain the conveniencies of life; which cannot be had without the labour of many. If every man depended upon himself for what he enjoyed, how destitute would be the situation of human affairs!

But even safety and convenience are not the only fruits of society. Man, living merely by himself, would be an ignorant unpolished savage. It is the intercourse of society which cultivates the human mind. One man's knowledge and experience is built upon another's; and so the great edifice of science and polished life is reared.

To enjoy these advantages, therefore, men joined in society; and hence it became necessary, that government should be established. Magistrates were created; laws made; taxes submitted to; and every one, instead of righting himself (except in mere self-defence) is enjoined to appeal to the laws he lives under, as the best security of his life and property. *Gilpin.*

§ 162. *Duty to our teachers and instructors—arising from the great importance of knowledge and religion—and the great necessity of gaining habits of attention, and of virtue, in our youth—analogy of youth and manhood to this world and the next.*

We are next enjoined "to submit ourselves to all our governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters." Here another species of government is pointed out. The laws of society are meant to govern our riper years; the instructions of our teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters, are meant to guide our youth.

By our "teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters," are meant all those who have the care of our education, and of our instruction in religion; whom we are to obey, and listen to, with humility and attention,

as the means of our advancement in knowledge and religion. The instructions we receive from them are unquestionably subject to our own judgment in future life; for by his own judgment every man must stand or fall. But, during our youth, it is highly proper for us to pay a dutiful submission to their instructions, as we cannot yet be supposed to have formed any judgment of our own. At that early age it should be our endeavour to acquire knowledge; and afterwards unprejudiced to form our opinions.

The duty which young people owe to their instructors, cannot be shewn better, than in the effect which the instructions they receive have upon them. They would do well, therefore, to consider the advantages of an early attention to these two things, both of great importance, knowledge and religion.

The great use of knowledge in all its various branches (to which the learned languages are generally considered as an introduction) is to free the mind from the prejudices of ignorance; and to give it juster, and more enlarged conceptions, than are the mere growth of rude nature. By reading, you add the experience of others to your own. It is the improvement of the mind chiefly, that makes the difference between man and man; and gives one man a real superiority over another.

Besides, the mind must be employed. The lower orders of men have their attention much ingrossed by those employments, in which the necessities of life engage them; and it is happy that they have. Labour stands in the room of education; and fills up those vacancies of mind, which, in a state of idleness, would be ingrossed by vice. And if they, who have more leisure, do not substitute something in the room of this, their minds also will become the prey of vice; and the more so, as they have the means to indulge it more in their power. A vacant mind is exactly that house mentioned in the gospel, which the devil found empty. In he entered; and taking with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, they took possession. It is an undoubted truth, that one vice indulged, introduces others; and that each succeeding vice becomes more depraved.—If then the mind must be employed, what can fill up its vacancies more rationally than the acquisition of knowledge? Let us therefore thank God for the opportunities he

he hath afforded us; and not turn into a curse those means of leisure, which might become so great a blessing.

But however necessary to us knowledge may be, religion, we know, is infinitely more so. The one adorns a man, and gives him, it is true, superiority and rank in life: but the other is absolutely essential to his happiness.

In the midst of youth, health, and abundance, the world is apt to appear a very gay and pleasing scene; it engages our desires; and in a degree satisfies them also. But it is wisdom to consider, that a time will come, when youth, health, and fortune, will all fail us; and if disappointment and vexation do not sour our taste for pleasure, at least sickness and infirmities will destroy it. In these gloomy seasons, and above all, at the approach of death, what will become of us without religion? When this world fails, where shall we fly, if we expect no refuge in another? Without holy hope in God, and resignation to his will, and trust in him for deliverance, what is there that can secure us against the evils of life?

The great utility therefore of knowledge and religion being thus apparent, it is highly incumbent upon us to pay a studious attention to them in our youth. If we do not, it is more than probable that we shall never do it: that we shall grow old in ignorance, by neglecting the one; and old in vice by neglecting the other.

For improvement in knowledge, youth is certainly the fittest season. The mind is then ready to receive any impression. It is free from all that care and attention which, in riper age, the affairs of life bring with them. The memory too is then stronger and better able to acquire the rudiments of knowledge; and as the mind is then void of ideas, it is more suited to those parts of learning which are conversant in words. Besides, there is sometimes in youth a modesty and ductility, which in advanced years, if those years especially have been left a prey to ignorance, become self-sufficiency and prejudice; and these effectually bar up all the inlets to knowledge.—But, above all, unless habits of attention and application are early gained, we shall scarcely acquire them afterwards.—The inconsiderate youth seldom reflects upon this; nor knows his loss, till he knows also that it cannot be retrieved.

Nor is youth more the season to acquire

knowledge, than to form religious habits. It is a great point to get habit on the side of virtue. It will make every thing smooth and easy. The earliest principles are generally the most lasting; and those of a religious cast are seldom wholly lost. Though the temptations of the world may, now and then, draw the well-principled youth aside; yet his principles being continually at war with his practice, there is hope, that in the end the better part may overcome the worse, and bring on a reformation. Whereas he, who has suffered habits of vice to get possession of his youth, has little chance of being brought back to a sense of religion. In a common course of things it can rarely happen. Some calamity must rouse him. He must be awakened by a storm, or sleep for ever.—How much better is it then to make that easy to us, which we know is best! And to form those habits now, which hereafter we shall wish we had formed!

There are, who would restrain youth from imbibing any religious principles, till they can judge for themselves; lest they should imbibe prejudice for truth. But why should not the same caution be used in science also; and the minds of youth left void of all impressions? The experiment, I fear, in both cases would be dangerous. If the mind were left uncultivated during so long a period, though nothing else should find entrance, vice certainly would: and it would make the larger shoots, as the soil would be vacant. A boy had better receive knowledge and religion mixed with error, than none at all. For when the mind is set a thinking, it may deposit its prejudices by degrees, and get right at last: but in a state of stagnation it will infallibly become foul.

To conclude, our youth bears the same proportion to our more advanced life, as this world does to the next. In this life we must form and cultivate those habits of virtue, which must qualify us for a better state. If we neglect them here, and contract habits of an opposite kind, instead of gaining that exalted state, which is promised to our improvement, we shall of course sink into that state, which is adapted to the habits we have formed.

Exactly thus is youth introductory to manhood: to which it is, properly speaking, a state of preparation. During this season we must qualify ourselves for the parts we are to act hereafter. In manhood we bear the fruit, which has in youth been planted.

planted. If we have fauntered away our youth, we must expect to be ignorant men. If indolence and inattention have taken an early possession of us, they will probably increase as we advance in life; and make us a burden to ourselves, and useless to society. If again, we suffer ourselves to be misled by vicious inclinations, they will daily get new strength, and end in dissolute lives. But if we cultivate our minds in our youth, attain habits of attention and industry, of virtue and sobriety, we shall find ourselves well prepared to act our future parts in life; and what above all things ought to be our care, by gaining this command over ourselves, we shall be more able, as we get forward in the world, to resist every new temptation, as it arises. *Gilpin.*

§ 163. *Behaviour to superiors.*

We are next enjoined "to order ourselves lowly and reverently to all our betters."

By our betters are meant they who are in a superior station of life to our own; and by "ordering ourselves lowly and reverently towards them," is meant paying them that respect which is due to their station.

The word 'betters' indeed includes two kinds of persons, to whom our respect is due—those who have a natural claim to it; and those who have an acquired one; that is, a claim arising from some particular situation in life.

Among the first, are all our superior relations; not only parents, but all other relations, who are in a line above us. All these have a natural claim to our respect. —There is a respect also due from youth to age; which is always becoming, and tends to keep youth within the bounds of modesty.

To others, respect is due from those particular stations which arise from society and government. Fear God, says the text; and it adds, "honour the king."

It is due also from many other situations in life. Employments, honours, and even wealth, will exact it; and all may justly exact it, in a proper degree.

But it may here perhaps be inquired, why God should permit this latter distinction among men? That some should have more authority than others, we can easily see, is absolutely necessary in government; but among men, who are all born equal,

why should the goods of life be distributed in so unequal a proportion?

To this inquiry, it may be answered, that, in the first place, we see nothing in this, but what is common in all the works of God. A gradation is every where observable. Beauty, strength, swiftness, and other qualities, are varied through the creation in numberless degrees. In the same manner likewise are varied the gifts of fortune, as they are called. Why therefore should one man's being richer than another surprize us more than his being stronger than another, or more prudent?

Though we can but very inadequately trace the wisdom of God in his works, yet very wise reasons appear for this variety in the gifts of fortune. It seems necessary both in a civil, and in a moral light.

In a civil light, it is the necessary accompaniment of various employments; on which depend all the advantages of society. Like the stones of a regular building, some must range higher, and some lower; some must support, and others be supported; some will form the strength of the building, and others its ornament; but all unite in producing one regular and proportioned whole. If then different employments are necessary, of course different degrees of wealth, honour, and consequence, must follow; a variety of distinctions and obligations; in short, different ranks, and a subordination, must take place.

Again, in a moral light, the disproportion of wealth, and other worldly adjuncts, gives a range to the more extensive exercise of virtue. Some virtues could but faintly exist upon the plan of an equality. If some did not abound, there were little room for temperance; if some did not suffer need, there were as little for patience. Other virtues again could hardly exist at all. Who could practise generosity, where there was no object of it? Who humility, where all ambitious desires were excluded?

Since then Providence, in scattering these various gifts, proposes ultimately the good of man; it is our duty to acquiesce in this order, and "to behave ourselves lowly and reverently" (not with servility, but with a decent respect) "to all our superiors."

Before I conclude this subject, it may

be proper to observe, in vindication of the ways of Providence, that we are not to suppose happiness and misery necessarily connected with riches and poverty. Each condition hath its particular sources both of pleasure and pain, unknown to the other. Those in elevated stations have a thousand latent pangs, of which their inferiors have no idea; while their inferiors again have as many pleasures, which the others cannot taste. I speak only of such modes of happiness or misery as arise immediately from different stations. Of misery, indeed, from a variety of other causes, all men of every station are equal heirs: either when God lays his hand upon us in sickness, or misfortune: or when, by our own follies and vices, we become the ministers of our own distress.

Who then would build his happiness upon an elevated station? Or who would envy the possession of such happiness in another? We know not with what various distresses that station, which is the object of our envy, may be attended.—Besides, as we are accountable for all we possess, it may be happy for us that we possess so little. The means of happiness, as far as station can procure them, are commonly in our own power, if we are not wanting to ourselves.

Let each of us then do his duty in that station which Providence has assigned him; ever remembering, that the next world will soon destroy all earthly distinctions.—One distinction only will remain among the sons of men at that time—the distinction between good and bad; and this distinction it is worth all our pains and all our ambition to acquire. *Gilpin.*

§ 164. *Against wronging our neighbours by injurious words.*

We are next instructed “to hurt nobody by word or deed—to be true and just in all our dealings—to bear no malice nor hatred in our hearts—to keep our hands from picking and stealing—our tongues from evil speaking, lying, and slandering.”

The duties comprehended in these words are a little transposed. What should class under one head is brought under another. “To hurt nobody by word or deed,” is the general proposition. The under parts should follow: First, “to keep the tongue from evil speaking, lying, and slandering,” which is, “to hurt nobody by word.” Secondly, “to be true and just

in all our dealings;” and “to keep our hands from picking and stealing;” which is, “to hurt nobody by deed.” As to the injunction, “to bear no malice nor hatred in our hearts,” it belongs properly to neither of these heads; but is a distinct one by itself. The duties being thus separated, I shall proceed to explain them.

And, first, of injuring our neighbour by our “words.” This may be done, we find, in three ways; by “evil-speaking, by lying, and by slandering.”

By “evil-speaking,” is meant speaking ill of our neighbour; but upon a supposition, that this ill is the truth. In some circumstances it is certainly right to speak ill of our neighbour; as when we are called upon in a court of justice to give our evidence; or, when we can set any one right in his opinion of a person, in whom he is about to put an improper confidence. Nor can there be any harm in speaking of a bad action, which has been determined in a court of justice, or is otherwise become notorious.

But on the other hand, it is highly disallowable to speak wantonly of the characters of others from common fame: because, in a thousand instances, we find that stories, which have no better foundation, are misrepresented. They are perhaps only half-told—they have been heard through the medium of malice or envy—some favourable circumstance hath been omitted—some foreign circumstance hath been added—some trifling circumstance hath been exaggerated—the motive, the provocation, or perhaps the reparation hath been concealed—in short, the representation of the fact is, some way or other, totally different from the fact itself.

But even, when we have the best evidence of a bad action, with all its circumstances before us, we surely indulge a very ill-natured pleasure in spreading the shame of an offending brother. We can do no good; and we may do harm: we may weaken his good resolutions by exposing him: we may harden him against the world. Perhaps it may be his first bad action. Perhaps nobody is privy to it but ourselves. Let us give him at least one trial. Let us not cast the first stone. Which of our lives could stand so strict a scrutiny? He only who is without sin himself can have any excuse for treating his brother with severity.

Let us next consider “lying;” which

is an intention to deceive by falsehood in our words.—To warn us against lying, we should do well to consider the folly, the meanness, and the wickedness of it.

The folly of lying consists in its defeating its own purpose. A habit of lying is generally in the end detected; and, after detection, the liar, instead of deceiving, will not even be believed when he happens to speak the truth. Nay, every single lye is attended with such a variety of circumstances, which lead to a detection, that it is often discovered. The use generally made of a lye, is to cover a fault; but as the end is seldom answered, we only aggravate what we wish to conceal. In point even of prudence, an honest confession would serve us better.

The meanness of lying arises from the cowardice which it implies. We dare not boldly and nobly speak the truth; but have recourse to low subterfuges, which always argue a sordid and disingenuous mind. Hence it is, that in the fashionable world, the word liar is always considered as a term of peculiar reproach.

The wickedness of lying consists in its perverting one of the greatest blessings of God, the use of speech, in making that a mischief to mankind, which was intended for a benefit. Truth is the great bond of society. Falsehood, of course, tends to its dissolution. If one man may lye, why not another? And if there is no mutual trust among men, there is an end of all intercourse and dealing.

An equivocation is nearly related to a lye. It is an intention to deceive under words of a double meaning, or words which, literally speaking, are true; and is equally criminal with the most downright breach of truth. When St. Peter asked Sapphira (in the 5th chapter of the Acts) "whether her husband had sold the land for so much?" She answered he had: and literally she spoke the truth; for he had sold it for that sum included in a larger. But having an intention to deceive, we find the apostle considered the equivocation as a lye.

In short, it is the intention to deceive, which is criminal: the mode of deception, like the vehicle in which poison is conveyed, is of no consequence. A nod, or sign, may convey a lye as effectually as the most deceitful language.

Under the head of lying may be mentioned a breach of promise. While a resolution remains in our own breasts, it is sub-

ject to our own review: but when we make another person a party with us, an engagement is made; and every engagement, though only of the lightest kind, should be punctually observed. If we have added to this engagement a solemn promise, the obligation is so much the stronger; and he who does not think himself bound by such an obligation, has no pretensions to the character of an honest man. A breach of promise is still worse than a lye. A lye is simply a breach of truth: but a breach of promise is a breach both of truth and trust.

Forgetfulness is a weak excuse: it only shews how little we are affected by so solemn an engagement. Should we forget to call for a sum of money, of which we were in want, at an appointed time? Or do we think a solemn promise of less value than a sum of money?

Having considered evil speaking and lying, let us next consider slandering. By slandering, we mean, injuring our neighbour's character by falsehood. Here we still rise higher in the scale of injurious words. Slandering our neighbour is the greatest injury, which words can do him; and is, therefore, worse than either evil-speaking or lying. The mischief of this sin depends on the value of our characters. All men, unless they be past feeling, desire naturally to be thought well of by their fellow-creatures: a good character is one of the principal means of being serviceable either to ourselves or others; and among numbers, the very bread they eat depends upon it. What aggravated injury, therefore, do we bring upon every man, whose name we slander? And, what is still worse, the injury is irreparable. If you defraud a man; restore what you took, and the injury is repaired. But, if you slander him, it is not in your power to shut up all the ears, and all the mouths, to which your tale may have access. The evil spreads, like the winged seeds of some noxious plants, which scatter mischief on a breath of air, and disperse it on every side, and beyond prevention.

Before we conclude this subject, it may just be mentioned, that a slander may be spread as a lye may be told, in various ways. We may do it by an insinuation, as well as in a direct manner; we may spread it in a secret; or propagate it under the colour of friendship.

I may add also, that it is a species of slander, and often a very malignant one, to lessen the merits or, exaggerate the failings

failings of others; as it is likewise to omit defending a misrepresented character, or to let others bear the blame of our offences.

Gilpin.

§ 165. *Against wronging our neighbour by injurious actions.*

Having thus considered injurious words, let us next consider injurious actions. On this head we are enjoined "to keep our hands from picking and stealing, and to be true and just in all our dealings."

As to theft, it is a crime of so odious and vile a nature, that one would imagine no person, who hath had the least tincture of a virtuous education, even though driven to necessity, could be led into it.—I shall not, therefore, enter into a dispassionate from this crime; but go on with the explanation of the other part of the injunction, and see what it is to be true and just in all our dealings.

Justice is even still more, if possible, the support of society, than truth: inasmuch as a man may be more injurious by his actions, than by his words. It is for this reason, that the whole force of human law is bent to restrain injustice; and the happiness of every society will increase in proportion to this restraint.

We very much err, however, if we suppose, that every thing within the bounds of law is justice. The law was intended only for bad men; and it is impossible to make the meshes of it so strait, but that many very great enormities will escape. The well meaning man, therefore, knowing that the law was not made for him, consults a better guide—his own conscience, informed by religion. And, indeed, the great difference between the good and the bad man consists in this: the good man will do nothing, but what his conscience will allow; the bad man will do any thing which the law cannot reach.

It would, indeed, be endless to describe the various ways, in which a man may be dishonest within the limits of law. They are as various as our intercourse with mankind. Some of the most obvious of them I shall cursorily mention.

In matters of commerce the knave has many opportunities. The different qualities of the same commodity—the different modes of adulteration—the specious arts of vending—the frequent ignorance in purchasing; and a variety of other circumstances, open an endless field to the ingenuity of fraud. The honest fair dealer,

in the mean time, has only one rule, which is, that all arts, however common in business, which are intended to deceive, are utterly unlawful. It may be added, upon this head, that if any one, conscious of having been a transgressor, is desirous of repairing his fault, restitution is by all means necessary: till that be done, he continues in a course of injustice.

Again, in matters of contract, a man has many opportunities of being dishonest within the bounds of law. He may be strict in observing the letter of an agreement, when the equitable meaning requires a laxer interpretation: or, he can take the laxer interpretation, when it serves his purpose; and at the loop-hole of some ambiguous expression exclude the literal meaning, though it be undoubtedly the true one.

The same iniquity appears in withholding from another his just right; or in putting him to expence in recovering it. The movements of the law are slow; and in many cases cannot be otherwise; but he who takes the advantage of this to injure his neighbour, proves himself an undoubted knave.

It is a species of the same kind of injustice to withhold a debt, when we have ability to pay; or to run into debt, when we have not that ability. The former can proceed only from a bad disposition; the latter, from suffering our desires to exceed our station. Some are excused, on this head, as men of generous principles, which they cannot confine. But what is their generosity? They assist one man by injuring another. And what good arises to society from hence? Such persons cannot act on principle; and we need not hesitate to rank them with those, who run into debt to gratify their own selfish inclinations. One man desires the elegancies of life; another desires what he thinks an equal good, the reputation of generosity.

Oppression is another species of injustice; by which, in a thousand ways, under the cover of law, we may take the advantage of the superiority of our power, either to crush an inferior, or humble him to our designs.

Ingratitude is another. A loan, we know, claims a legal return. And is the obligation less, if, instead of a loan, you receive a kindness? The law, indeed, says nothing on this point of immorality; but an honest conscience will be very loud in the condemnation of it.

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We may be unjust also in our resentment; by carrying it beyond what reason and religion prescribe.

But it would be endless to describe the various ways, in which injustice discovers itself. In truth, almost every omission of duty may be resolved into injustice.

The next precept is, "to bear no malice nor hatred in our hearts."

The malice and hatred of our hearts arise, in the first place, from injurious treatment; and surely no man, when he is injured, can at first help feeling that he is so. But Christianity requires, that we should subdue these feelings, as soon as possible; "and not suffer the sun to go down upon our wrath." Various are the passages of scripture, which inculcate the forgiveness of injuries. Indeed no point is more laboured than this; and with reason, because no temper is more productive of evil, both to ourselves and others, than a malicious one. The sensations of a mind burning with revenge are beyond description: and as we are at these seasons very unable to judge coolly, and of course liable to carry our resentment too far, the consequence is, that, in our rage, we may do a thousand things, which can never be atoned for, and of which we may repent as long as we live.

Besides, one act draws on another; and retaliation keeps the quarrel alive. The gospel, therefore, ever gracious and kind to man, in all its precepts, enjoins us to check all those violent emotions, and to leave our cause in the hands of God. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord;" and he who, in opposition to this precept, takes vengeance into his own hands, and cherishes the malice and hatred of his heart, may assure himself that he has not yet learned to be a Christian. These precepts, perhaps, may not entirely agree with modern principles of honour: but let the man of honour see to that. The maxims of the world cannot change the truth of the gospel.

Nay, even in recovering our just right, or in pursuing a criminal to justice, we should take care that it be not done in the spirit of retaliation and revenge. If these be our motives, though we make the law our instrument, we are equally guilty.

But besides injurious treatment, the malice and hatred of our hearts have often another source, and that is envy: and thus in the litany; "envy, malice, and hatred," are all joined together with great proprie-

ty. The emotions of envy are generally cooler, and less violent, than those which arise from the resentment of injury; so that envy is seldom so mischievous in its effects as revenge: but with regard to ourselves, it is altogether as bad, and full as destructive of the spirit of christianity. What is the religion of that man, who instead of thanking Heaven for the blessings he receives, is fretting himself continually with a disagreeable comparison between himself and some other? He cannot enjoy what he has, because another has more wealth, a fairer fame, or perhaps more merit, than himself. He is miserable, because others are happy.

But to omit the wickedness of envy, how absurd and foolish is it, in a world where we must necessarily expect much real misery, to be perniciously inventive in producing it!

Besides, what ignorance! We see only the glaring outside of things. Under all that envied glare, many unseen distresses may lurk, from which our station may be free: for our merciful Creator seems to have bestowed happiness, as far as station is concerned, with great equality among all his creatures.

In conclusion, therefore, let it be the great object of our attention, and the subject of our prayers, to rid our minds of all this cursed intrusion of evil thoughts—whether they proceed from malice, or from an envious temper. Let all our malicious thoughts soften into charity and benevolence; and let us "forgive one another, as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us." As for our envious thoughts, as far as they relate to externals, let them subside in humility, acquiescence, and submission to the will of God. And when we are tempted to envy the good qualities of others, let us spurn so base a conception, and change it into a generous emulation—into an endeavour to raise ourselves to an equality with our rival, not to depress him to a level with us. *Gilpin.*

§ 166. Duties to ourselves.

Thus far the duties we have considered come most properly under the head of those which we owe to our neighbour; what follows, relates rather to ourselves. On this head, we are instructed "to keep our bodies in temperance, soberness, and chastity."

Though, our souls should be our great concern, yet, as they are nearly connected

with our bodies, and as the impurity of the one contaminates the other, a great degree of moral attention is, of course, due to our bodies also.

As our first station is in this world, to which our bodies particularly belong, they are formed with such appetites as are requisite to our commodious living in it; and the rule given us is, "to use the world so as not to abuse it." St. Paul, by a beautiful allusion, calls our bodies the "temples of the Holy Ghost;" by which he means to impress us with a strong idea of their dignity; and to deter us from debasing, by low pleasures, what should be the seat of so much purity. To youth these cautions are above measure necessary, because their passions and appetites are strong; their reason and judgment weak. They are prone to pleasure, and void of reflection. How, therefore, these young adventurers in life may best steer their course, and use this sinful world so as not to abuse it, is a consideration well worth their attention. Let us then see under what regulations their appetites should be restrained.

By keeping our bodies in temperance is meant avoiding excess in eating, with regard both to the quantity and quality of our food. We should neither eat more than our stomachs can well bear; nor be nice and delicate in our eating.

To preserve the body in health is the end of eating; and they who regulate themselves merely by this end, who eat without choice or distinction, paying no regard to the pleasure of eating, observe perhaps the best rule of temperance. They go rather indeed beyond temperance, and may be called abstemious. A man may be temperate, and yet allow himself a little more indulgence. Great care, however, is here necessary; and the more, as perhaps no precise rule can be affixed, after we have passed the first great limit, and let the palate loose among variety *. Our own discretion must be our guide, which should be constantly kept awake by

considering the many bad consequences which attend a breach of temperance.—Young men, in the full vigour of health, do not consider these things; but as age comes on, and different maladies begin to appear, they may perhaps repent they did not a little earlier practise the rules of temperance.

In a moral and religious light, the consequences of intemperance are still worse. To enjoy a comfortable meal, when it comes before us, is allowable: but he who suffers his mind to dwell upon the pleasures of eating, and makes them the employment of his thoughts, has at least opened one source of mental corruption †.

After all, he who would most perfectly enjoy the pleasures of the table, such as they are, must look for them within the rules of temperance. The palate, accustomed to satiety, hath lost its tone; and the greatest sensualists have been brought to confess, that the coarsest fare, with an appetite kept in order by temperance, affords a more delicious repast, than the most luxurious meal without it.

As temperance relates chiefly to eating, sobriety or sobriety relates properly to drinking. And here the same observations recur. The strictest, and perhaps the best rule, is merely to satisfy the end of drinking. But if a little more indulgence be taken, it ought to be taken with the greatest circumspection.

With regard to youth, indeed, I should be inclined to great strictness on this head. In eating, if they eat of proper and simple food, they cannot easily err. Their growing limbs, and strong exercise, require larger supplies than full-grown bodies, which must be kept in order by a more rigid temperance. But if more indulgence be allowed them in eating, less, surely, should in drinking. With strong liquors of every kind they have nothing to do; and if they should totally abstain on this head, it were so much the better. The languor which attends age ‡, requires perhaps, now and then, some aids; but the

* Nam varie res,

Ut noceant homini, credas memor illius escæ,

Quæ simplex olim tibi fuderit. At simul assis

Miscueris elixa, simul conchyliis turdis

Dulcis se in bilem vertent, stomachoque tumultum

Lenta feret pituita.—

Hos.

† Corpus onustum

Hesternis vitis, animum quoque pręgravat una,

Atque affigit humo divinæ particulum auræ.

Ubi

Hos. Sat.

‡ Accedant anni, et traheri mollius ætas

Imbecilla volet.

Ibid.

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spirits of youth want no recruits: a little rest is sufficient.

As to the bad consequences derived from excessive drinking, besides filling the blood with bloated and vicious humours, and debauching the purity of the mind, as in the case of intemperate eating, it is attended with this peculiar evil, the loss of our senses. Hence follow frequent inconveniencies and mortifications. We expose our follies—we betray our secrets—we are often imposed upon—we quarrel with our friends—we lay ourselves open to our enemies; and, in short, make ourselves the objects of contempt, and the topics of ridicule to all our acquaintance.—Nor is it only the act of intoxication which deprives us of our reason during the prevalence of it; the habit of drunkenness soon besots and impairs the understanding, and renders us at all times less fit for the offices of life.

We are next enjoined “to keep our bodies in chastity.” “Flee youthful lusts,” says the apostle, “which war against the soul.” And there is surely nothing which carries on a war against the soul more successfully. Wherever we have a catalogue in scripture (and we have many such catalogues) of those sins which in a peculiar manner debauch the mind, these youthful lusts have always, under some denomination, a place among them.—To keep ourselves free from all contagion of this kind, let us endeavour to preserve a purity in our thoughts—our words—and our actions.

First, let us preserve a purity in our thoughts. These dark recesses, which the eye of the world cannot reach, are the receptacles of these youthful lusts. Here they find their first encouragement. The entrance of such impure ideas perhaps we cannot always prevent. We may always however prevent cherishing them: we may always prevent their making an impression upon us: the devil may be cast out as soon as discovered.

Let us always keep in mind, that even into these dark abodes the eye of Heaven can penetrate: that every thought of our hearts is open to that God, before whom we must one day stand; and that however secretly we may indulge these impure ideas, at the great day of account they will certainly appear in an awful detail against us.

Let us remember again, that if our bodies be the temples of the Holy Ghost, our minds are the very sanctuaries of those

temples: and if there be any weight in the apostle's argument against polluting our bodies, it urges with double force against polluting our minds.

But, above all other considerations, it behoves us most to keep our thoughts pure, because they are the fountains from which our words and actions flow. “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” Obscene words and actions are only bad thoughts matured, and spring as naturally from them as the plant from its seed. It is the same vicious depravity carried a step farther; and only shews a more confirmed and a more mischievous degree of guilt. While we keep our impurities in our thoughts, they debauch only ourselves: bad enough, it is true. But when we proceed to words and actions, we let our impurities loose: we spread the contagion, and become the corrupters of others.

Let it be our first care, therefore, to keep our thoughts pure. If we do this, our words and actions will be pure of course. And that we may be the better enabled to do it, let us use such helps as reason and religion prescribe. Let us avoid all company, and all books, that have a tendency to corrupt our minds; and every thing that can inflame our passions. He who allows himself in these things, holds a parley with vice; which will infallibly debauch him in the end, if he do not take the alarm in time, and break off such dalliance.

One thing ought to be our particular care, and that is, never to be unemployed. Ingenious amusements are of great use in filling up the vacancies of our time. Idle we should never be. A vacant mind is an invitation to vice. *Gilpin.*

§ 167. On coveting and desiring other men's goods.

We are forbidden, next, “to covet, or desire other men's goods.”

There are two great paths of vice, into which bad men commonly strike; that of unlawful pleasure, and that of unlawful gain.—The path of unlawful pleasure we have just examined; and have seen the danger of obeying the headstrong impulse of our appetites.—We have considered also an immoderate love of gain, and have seen dishonesty and fraud in a variety of shapes. But we have yet viewed them only as they relate to society. We have viewed only the outward action. The rule before us, “We must not covet, nor desire other men's

men's goods," comes a step nearer home, and considers the motive which governs the action.

Covetousness, or the love of money, is called in scripture "the root of all evil;" and it is called so for two reasons; because it makes us wicked, and because it makes us miserable.

First, it makes us wicked. When it once gets possession of the heart, it will let no good principle flourish near it. Most vices have their fits; and when the violence of the passion is spent, there is some interval of calm. The vicious appetite cannot always run riot. It is fatigued at least by its own impetuosity; and it is possible, that in this moment of tranquillity, a whisper from virtue may be heard. But in avarice, there is rarely intermission. It hangs like a dead weight upon the soul, always pulling it to earth. We might as well expect to see a plant grow upon a flint, as a virtue in the heart of a miser.

It makes us miserable as well as wicked. The cares and the fears of avarice are proverbial; and it must needs be, that he, who depends for happiness on what is liable to a thousand accidents, must of course feel as many distresses, and almost as many disappointments. The good man depends for happiness on something more permanent; and if his worldly affairs go ill, his great dependance is still left. But as wealth is the god which the covetous man worships (for "covetousness," we are told, "is idolatry,") a disappointment here is a disappointment indeed. Be he ever so prosperous, his wealth cannot secure him against the evils of mortality; against that time, when he must give up all he values; when his bargains of advantage will be over, and nothing left but tears and despair.

But even a desiring frame of mind, though it be not carried to such a length, is always productive of misery. It cannot be otherwise. While we suffer ourselves to be continually in quest of what we have not, it is impossible that we should be happy with what we have. In a word, to abridge our wants as much as possible, not to increase them, is the truest happiness.

We are much mistaken, however, if we think the man who hoards up his money

is the only covetous man. The prodigal, though he differ in his end, may be as avaricious in his means †. The former denies himself every comfort; the latter grasps at every pleasure. Both characters are equally bad in different extremes. The miser is more detestable in the eyes of the world, because he enters into none of its joys; but it is a question, which is more wretched in himself, or more pernicious to society.

As covetousness is esteemed the vice of age, every appearance of it among young persons ought particularly to be discouraged; because if it gets ground at this early period, nobody can tell how far it may not afterwards proceed. And yet, on the other side, there may be great danger of encouraging the opposite extreme. As it is certainly right, under proper restrictions, both to save our money, and to spend it, it would be highly useful to fix the due bounds on each side. But nothing is more difficult than to raise these nice limits between extremes. Every man's case, in a thousand circumstances, differs from his neighbour's; and as no rule can be fixed for all, every man of course, in these disquisitions, must be left to his own conscience. We are indeed very ready to give our opinions how others ought to act. We can adjust with great nicety what is proper for them to do; and point out their mistakes with much precision; while nothing is necessary to us, but to act as properly as we can ourselves; observing as just a mean as possible between prodigality and avarice; and applying, in all our difficulties, to the word of God, where these great land-marks of morality are the most accurately fixed.

We have now taken a view of what is prohibited in our commerce with mankind: let us next see what is enjoined. (We are still proceeding with those duties which we owe to ourselves). Instead of spending our fortune therefore in unlawful pleasure, or increasing it by unlawful gain; we are required "to learn and labour truly (that is honestly) to get our own living, and to do our duty in that state of life, unto which it shall please God to call us."—These words will be sufficiently explained by considering, first, that we all have some station in life—some

* *Savist, atque novos moveat fortuna tumultus;*

Quantum hinc imminuet?

† *Atheni appetens, sui profusus.*

HOR. SAT.

SAT. de Catal.

particular duties to discharge; and secondly, in what manner we ought to discharge them.

First, that man was not born to be idle, may be inferred from the active spirit that appears in every part of nature. Every thing is alive; every thing contributes to the general good; even the very inanimate parts of the creation, plants, stones, metals, cannot be called totally inactive, but bear their part likewise in the general usefulness. If then every part, even of inanimate nature, be thus employed, surely we cannot suppose it was the intention of the Almighty Father, that man, who is the most capable of employing himself properly, should be the only creature without employment.

Again, that man was born for active life, is plain from the necessity of labour. If it had not been necessary, God would not originally have imposed it. But without it, the body would become enervated, and the mind corrupted. Idleness, therefore, is justly esteemed the origin both of disease and vice. So that if labour and employment, either of body or mind, had no use, but what respected ourselves, they would be highly proper: but they have farther use.

The necessity of them is plain, from the want that all men have of the assistance of others. If so, this assistance should be mutual; every man should contribute his part. We have already seen, that it is proper there should be different stations in the world—that some should be placed high in life, and others low. The lowest, we know, cannot be exempt from labour; and the highest ought not: though their labour, according to their station, will be of a different kind. Some, we see, “must labour (as the catechism phrases it) to get their own living; and others should do their duty in that state of life, whatever that state is, unto which it hath pleased God to call them.” All are assisted: all should assist. God distributes, we read, various talents among men; to some he gives five talents, to others two, and to others one: but it is expected, we find, that notwithstanding this inequality, each should employ the talent that is given to the best advantage: and he who received five talents was under the same obligation of improving them, as he who had received only one; and would, if he had hid his talents in the earth, have been punished, in proportion to the abuse.

Every man, even in the highest station, may find a proper employment, both for his time and fortune, if he please: and he may assure himself that God, by placing him in that station, never meant to exempt him from the common obligations of society, and give him a licence to spend his life in ease and pleasure. God meant assuredly, that he should bear his part in the general commerce of life—that he should consider himself not as an individual, but as a member of the community; the interests of which he is under an obligation to support with all his power;—and that his elevated station gives him no other pre-eminence than that of being the more extensively useful.

Having thus seen, that we have all some station in life to support—some particular duties to discharge; let us now see in what manner we ought to discharge them.

We have an easy rule given us in scripture on this head: that all our duties in life should be performed “as to the Lord, and not unto man:” that is, we should consider our stations in life as trusts reposed in us by our Maker; and as such should discharge the duties of them. What, though no worldly trust be reposed? What, though we are accountable to nobody upon earth? Can we therefore suppose ourselves in reality less accountable? Can we suppose that God, for no reason that we can divine, has singled us out, and given us a large proportion of the things of this world (while others around us are in need) for no other purpose than to squander it away upon ourselves? To God undoubtedly we are accountable for every blessing we enjoy. What mean, in scripture, the talents given, and the use assigned; but the conscientious discharge of the duties of life, according to the advantages with which they are attended?

It matters not whether these advantages be an inheritance, or an acquisition: still they are the gift of God. Agreeably to their rank in life, it is true, all men should live; human distinctions require it; and in doing this properly, every one around will be benefited. Utility should be considered in all our expences. Even the very amusements of a man of fortune should be founded in it.

In short, it is the constant injunction of scripture, in whatever station we are placed, to consider ourselves as God's servants, and as acting immediately under his eye, not

not expecting our reward among men, but from our great Master who is in heaven. This sanctifies, in a manner, all our actions: it places the little difficulties of our station in the light of God's appointments; and turns the most common duties of life into acts of religion. *Gilpin.*

§ 168. *On the sacrament of baptism.*

The sacrament of baptism is next considered; in which, if we consider the inward grace, we shall see how aptly the sign represents it.—The inward grace, or thing signified, we are told, is “a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness:” by which is meant that great renovation of nature, that purity of heart, which the christian religion is intended to produce. And surely there cannot be a more significant sign of this than water, on account of its cleansing nature. As water refreshes the body, and purifies it from all contracted filth; it aptly represents that renovation of nature, which cleanses the soul from the impurities of sin. Water indeed, among the ancients, was more adapted to the thing signified, than it is at present among us. They used immersion in baptizing: so that the child being dipped into the water, and raised out again, baptism with them was more significant of a new birth unto righteousness. But though we, in these colder climates, think immersion an unsafe practice; yet the original meaning is still supposed.

It is next asked, What is required of those who are baptised? To this we answer, “Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and faith, whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God, made to them in that sacrament.”

The primitive church was extremely strict on this head. In those times, before christianity was established, when adults offered themselves to baptism, no one was admitted, till he had given a very satisfactory evidence of his repentance; and till, on good grounds, he could profess his faith in Christ: and it was afterwards expected from him, that he should prove his faith and repentance, by a regular obedience during the future part of his life.

If faith and repentance are expected at baptism; it is a very natural question,

Why then are infants baptised, when, by reason of their tender age, they can give no evidence of either?

Whether infants should be admitted to baptism, or whether that sacrament should be deferred till years of discretion; is a question in the christian church, which hath been agitated with some animosity. Our church by no means looks upon baptism as necessary to the infant's salvation*. No man acquainted with the spirit of christianity can conceive, that God will leave the salvation of so many innocent souls in the hands of others. But the practice is considered as founded upon the usage of the earliest times: and the church observing, that circumcision was the introductory rite to the Jewish covenant; and that baptism was intended to succeed circumcision; it naturally supposes, that baptism should be administered to infants, as circumcision was. The church, however, in this case, hath provided sponsors, who make a profession of obedience in the child's name. But the nature and office of this proxy hath been already examined, under the head of our baptismal vow. *Gilpin.*

§ 169. *On the sacrament of the Lord's supper.*

The first question is an enquiry into the original of the institution: “Why was the sacrament of the Lord's supper ordained?”

It was ordained, we are informed,—“for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ; and of the benefits which we receive thereby.”

In examining a sacrament in general, we have already seen, that both baptism, and the Lord's supper, were originally instituted as the “means of receiving the grace of God; and as pledges to assure us thereof.”

But besides the primary ends, they have each a secondary one; in representing the two most important truths of religion; which gives them more force and influence. Baptism, we have seen, represents that renovation of our sinful nature, which the gospel was intended to introduce; and the peculiar end, which the Lord's supper had in view, was the sacrifice of the death of Christ; with all the be-

* The catechism asserts the sacraments to be only generally necessary to salvation, excepting particular cases. Where the use of them is intentionally rejected, it is certainly criminal.—The Quakers indeed reject them on principle; but though we may wonder both at their logic and divinity, we should be sorry to include them in an anathema.

benefits which arise from it—the remission of our sins—and the reconciliation of the world to God. “This do,” said our Saviour (alluding to the passover, which the Lord’s supper was designed to supercede) not as hitherto, in memory of your deliverance from Egypt; but in memory of that greater deliverance, of which the other was only a type: “Do it in remembrance of me.”

The outward part, or sign of the Lord’s supper, is “bread and wine”—the things signified are the “body and blood of Christ.”—In examining the sacrament of baptism, I endeavoured to shew, how very apt a symbol water is in that ceremony. Bread and wine also are symbols equally apt in representing the body and blood of Christ: and in the use of these particular symbols, it is reasonable to suppose, that our Saviour had an eye to the Jewish passover; in which it was a custom to drink wine, and to eat bread. He might have instituted any other apt symbols for the same purpose; but it was his usual practice, through the whole system of his institution, to make it, in every part, as familiar as possible: and for this reason he seems to have chosen such symbols as were then in use; that he might give as little offence as possible in a matter of indifference.

As our Saviour, in the institution of his supper, ordered both the bread and the wine to be received; it is certainly a great error in papists, to deny the cup to the laity. They say, indeed, that, as both flesh and blood are united in the substance of the human body; so are they in the sacramental bread; which, according to them, is changed, or, as they phrase it, transubstantiated into the real body of Christ. If they have no other reason, why do they administer wine to the clergy? The clergy might participate equally of both in the bread.—But the plain truth is, they are desirous, by this invention, to add an air of mystery to the sacrament, and a superstitious reverence to the priest, as if he, being endowed with some peculiar holiness, might be allowed the use of both.

There is a difficulty in this part of the catechism, which should not be passed over. We are told, that “the body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken, and received by the faithful in the Lord’s supper.” This expression sounds very like the popish doctrine, just mentioned, of tran-

substantiation. The true sense of the words undoubtedly is, that the faithful believer only, verily and indeed receives the benefit of the sacrament; but the expression must be allowed to be inaccurate, as it is capable of an interpretation so entirely opposite to that which the church of England hath always professed.—I would not willingly suppose, as some have done, that the compilers of the catechism meant to manage the affair of transubstantiation with the papists. It is one thing to shew a liberality of sentiment in matters of indifference; and another to speak timidly and ambiguously, where essentials are concerned.

It is next asked, What benefits we receive from the Lord’s supper? To which it is answered, “The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine.” As our bodies are strengthened and refreshed, in a natural way, by bread and wine; so should our souls be, in a spiritual way, by a devout commemoration of the passion of Christ. By gratefully remembering what he suffered for us, we should be excited to a greater abhorrence of sin, which was the cause of his sufferings. Every time we partake of this sacrament, like faithful soldiers, we take a fresh oath to our leader; and should be animated anew, by his example, to persevere in the spiritual conflict in which, under him, we are engaged.

It is lastly asked, “What is required of them who come to the Lord’s supper?” To which we answer, “That we should examine ourselves, whether we repent us truly of our former sins—steadfastly purposing to lead a new life—have a lively faith in God’s mercy through Christ—with a thankful remembrance of his death; and to be in charity with all men.”

That pious frame of mind is here, in very few words, pointed out, which a christian ought to cherish and cultivate in himself at all times; but especially, upon the performance of any solemn act of religion. Very little indeed is said in scripture, of any particular frame of mind, which should accompany the performance of this duty; but it may easily be inferred from the nature of the duty itself.

In the first place, “we should repent us truly of our former sins; steadfastly purposing to lead a new life.” He who performs a religious exercise, without being earnest in this point; adds only a pharisaical hypocrisy to his other sins. Unless

he seriously resolve to lead a good life, he had better be all of a piece; and not pretend, by receiving the sacrament, to a piety which he does not feel.

These "steadfast purposes of leading a new life," form a very becoming exercise to christians. The lives even of the best of men afford only a mortifying retrospect. Though they may have conquered some of their worst propensities; yet the triumphs of sin over them, at the various periods of their lives, will always be remembered with sorrow; and may always be remembered with advantage; keeping them on their guard for the future, and strengthening them more and more in all their good resolutions of obedience.—And when can these meditations arise more properly, than when we are performing a rite, instituted on purpose to commemorate the great atonement for sin?

To our repentance, and resolutions of obedience, we are required to add "a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ; with a thankful remembrance of his death." We should impress ourselves with the deepest sense of humility—totally rejecting every idea of our own merit—hoping for God's favour only through the merits of our great Redeemer—and with hearts full of gratitude, trusting only to his all-sufficient sacrifice.

Lastly, we are required, at the celebration of this great rite, to be "in charity with all men." It commemorates the greatest instance of love that can be conceived; and should therefore raise in us correspondent affections. It should excite in us that constant flow of benevolence, in which the spirit of religion consists; and without which indeed we can have no religion at all. Love is the very distinguishing badge of christianity: "By this," said our great Master, "shall all men know that ye are my disciples."

One species of charity should, at this time, never be forgotten; and that is, the forgiveness of others. No acceptable gift can be offered at this altar, but in the spirit of reconciliation.—Hence it was, that the ancient christians instituted, at the celebration of the Lord's supper, what they called love-feasts. They thought, they could not give a better instance of their being in perfect charity with each other, than by joining all ranks together in one common meal.—By degrees, indeed, this

well-meant custom degenerated; and it may not be amiss to observe here, that the passages* in which these enormities are rebuked, have been variously misconstrued; and have frightened many well meaning persons from the sacrament. Whereas what the apostle here says, hath no other relation to this rite, than as it was attended by a particular abuse in receiving it; and as this is a mode of abuse which doth not now exist, the apostle's reproof seems not to affect the christians of this age.

What the primary, and what the secondary ends in the two sacraments were, I have endeavoured to explain. But there might be others.

God might intend them as trials of our faith. The divine truths of the gospel speak for themselves; but the performance of a positive duty rests only on faith.

These institutions are also strong arguments for the truth of christianity. We trace the observance of them into the very earliest times of the gospel. We can trace no other origin than what the scriptures give us. These rites therefore greatly tend to corroborate the scriptures.

God also, who knows what is in man, might condescend so far to his weakness, as to give him these external badges of religion, to keep the spirit of it more alive. And it is indeed probable, that nothing has contributed more than these ceremonies to preserve a sense of religion among mankind. It is a melancholy proof of this, that no contentions in the christian church have been more violent, nor carried on with more acrimony, and unchristian zeal, than the contentions about baptism and the Lord's supper; as if the very essence of religion consisted in this or that mode of observing these rites.—But this is the abuse of them.

Let us be better taught: let us receive these sacraments, for the gracious purposes for which our Lord enjoined them, with gratitude, and with reverence. But let us not lay a greater stress upon them than our Lord intended. Heaven, we doubt not, may be gained, when there have been the means of receiving neither the one sacrament nor the other. But unless our affections are right, and our lives answerable to them, we can never please God, though we perform the externals of religion with ever so much exactness. We may err in our notions about the sacraments: the

* See 1 Cor. xi.

world has long been divided on these subjects; and a gracious God, it may be hoped, will pardon our errors. But in matters of practice we have no apology for error. The great lines of our duty are drawn so strong, that a deviation here is not error, but guilt.

Let us then, to conclude, from the whole, make it our principal care to purify our hearts in the sight of God. Let us beseech him to increase the influence of his Holy Spirit within us, that our faith may be of that kind "which worketh by love;" that all our affections, and from them our actions, may flow in a steady course of obedience; that each day may correct the last by a sincere repentance of our mistakes in life; and that we may continue gradually to approach nearer the idea of christian perfection. Let us do this, disclaiming, after all, any merits of our own; and not trusting in outward observances; but trusting in the merits of Christ to make up our deficiencies; and we need not fear our acceptance with God.

Gilpin.

§ 170. *A serious expostulation with unbelievers.*

It were to be wished, that the enemies of religion would at least bring themselves to apprehend its nature, before they opposed its authority. Did religion make its boast of beholding God with a clear and perfect view, and of possessing him without covering or veil, the argument would bear some colour, when men should alledge, that none of these things about them, do indeed afford this pretended evidence, and this degree of light. But since religion, on the contrary, represents men as in a state of darkness, and of estrangement from God; since it affirms him to have withdrawn himself from their discovery, and to have chosen, in his word, the very style and appellation of *Deus absconditus*; lastly, since it employs itself alike in establishing these two maxims, that God has left, in his church, certain characters of himself, by which they who sincerely seek him, shall not fail of a sensible conviction; and yet that he has, at the same time, so far shaded and obscured these characters, as to render them imperceptible to those who do not seek him with their whole heart, what advantage is it to men, who profess themselves negligent in the search of truth to complain so frequently, that nothing reveals and displays it to them? For this very obscurity, under which they labour, and which they make

an exception against the church, does itself evince one of the two grand points which the church maintains (without affecting the other) and is so far from overthrowing its doctrines, as to lend them a manifest confirmation and support.

If they would give their objections any strength, they ought to urge, that they have applied their utmost endeavour, and have used all means of information, even those which the church recommends, without satisfaction. Did they express themselves thus, they would indeed attack religion in one of its chief pretensions: but I hope, to shew, in the following papers, that no rational person can speak after this manner; and I dare assert, that none ever did. We know very well, how men under this indifference of spirit, behave themselves in the case: they suppose themselves to have made the mightiest effort towards the instruction of their minds, when they have spent some hours in reading the scriptures, and have asked some questions of a clergyman concerning the articles of faith. When this is done, they declare to all the world, that they have consulted books and men without success. I shall be excused, if I refrain not from telling such men, that this neglect of theirs is insupportable. It is not a foreign or a petty interest, which is here in debate; we are ourselves the parties, and all our hopes and fortunes are the depending stake.

The immortality of the soul is a thing which so deeply concerns, so infinitely imports us, that we must have utterly lost our feeling, to be altogether cold and remiss in our enquiries about it. And all our actions or designs, ought to bend so very different a way, according as we are either encouraged or forbidden, to embrace the hope of eternal rewards, that it is impossible for us to proceed with judgment and discretion, otherwise than as we keep this point always in view, which ought to be our ruling object, and final aim.

Thus is it our highest interest, no less than our principal duty, to get light into a subject on which our whole conduct depends. And, therefore, in the number of wavering and unsatisfied men, I make the greatest difference imaginable between those who labour with all their force to obtain instruction, and those who live without giving themselves any trouble, or so much as any thought in this affair.

I cannot but be touched with a hearty compassion for those who sincerely groan under

under this dissatisfaction; who look upon it as the greatest of misfortunes, and who spare no pains to deliver themselves from it, by making these researches their chief employment, and most serious study. But as for those, who pass their life without reflecting on its issue, and who, for this reason alone, because they find not in themselves a convincing testimony, refuse to seek it elsewhere, and to examine to the bottom, whether the opinion proposed be such as we are wont to entertain by popular simplicity and credulity, or as such, though obscure in itself, yet is built on solid and immovable foundations, I consider them after quite another manner. The carelessness which they betray in an affair, where their person, their interest, their whole eternity is embarked, rather provokes my resentment than engages my pity. Nay, it strikes me with amazement and astonishment; it is a monster to my apprehension. I speak not this as transported with the pious zeal of a spiritual and rapturous devotion: on the contrary, I affirm, that the love of ourselves, the interest of mankind, and the most simple and artless reason, do naturally inspire us with these sentiments; and that to see thus far, is not to exceed the sphere of unrefined, uneducated men.

It requires no great elevation of soul, to observe, that nothing in this world is productive of true contentment; that our pleasures are vain and fugitive, our troubles innumerable and perpetual: and that, after all, death, which threatens us every moment, must, in the compass of a few years (perhaps of a few days) put us into the eternal condition of happiness, or misery, or nothing. Between us and these three great periods, or states, no barrier is interposed, but life, the most brittle thing in all nature; and the happiness of heaven being certainly not designed for those who doubt whether they have an immortal part to enjoy it, such persons have nothing left, but the miserable chance of annihilation, or of hell.

There is not any reflection which can have more reality than this, as there is none which has greater terror. Let us set the bravest face on our condition, and play the heroes as artfully as we can; yet see here the issue which attends the goodliest life upon earth.

It is in vain for men to turn aside their thoughts from this eternity which awaits them, as if they were able to destroy it by denying it a place in their imagination: it

subsists in spite of them; it advanceth unobserved; and death, which is to draw the curtain from it, will in a short time infallibly reduce them to the dreadful necessity of being for ever nothing, or for ever miserable.

We have here a doubt of the most affrighting consequence, and which, therefore, to entertain, may be well esteemed the most grievous of misfortunes: but, at the same time, it is our indispensable duty not to lie under it, without struggling for deliverance.

He then who doubts, and yet seeks not to be resolved, is equally unhappy and unjust: but if withal he appears easy and composed, if he freely declares his indifference, nay, if he takes a vanity in professing it, and seems to make this most deplorable condition the subject of his pleasure and joy, I have not words to fix a name on so extravagant a creature. Where is the very possibility of entering into these thoughts and resolutions? What delight is there in expecting misery without end? What vanity in finding one's self encompassed with impenetrable darkness? Or what consolation in despairing for ever of a comforter?

To sit down with some sort of acquiescence under so fatal an ignorance, is a thing unaccountable beyond all expression; and they who live with such a disposition, ought to be made sensible of its absurdity and stupidity, by having their inward reflections laid open to them, that they may grow wise by the prospect of their own folly. For behold how men are wont to reason, while they obstinately remain thus ignorant of what they are, and refuse all methods of instruction and illumination.

Who has sent me into the world I know not; what the world is I know not, nor what I am myself. I am under an astonishing and terrifying ignorance of all things. I know not what my body is, what my senses, or my soul: this very part of me which thinks what I speak, which reflects upon every thing else, and even upon itself, yet is as mere a stranger to its own nature, as the dullest thing I carry about me. I behold these frightful spaces of the universe with which I am encompassed, and I find myself chained to one little corner of the vast extent, without understanding why I am placed in this seat, rather than in any other; or why this moment of time given me to live, was assigned rather at such a point, than at any other of the whole eternity which was before me, or

of all that which is to come after me. I see nothing but infinities on all sides, which devour and swallow me up like an atom, or like a shadow, which endures but a single instant, and is never to return. The sum of my knowledge is, that I must shortly die: but that which I am most ignorant of is this very death, which I feel unable to decline.

As I know not whence I came, so I know not whither I go; only this I know, that at my departure out of the world, I must either fall for ever into nothing, or into the hands of an incensed God, without being capable of deciding, which of these two conditions shall eternally be my portion. Such is my state, full of weakness, obscurity, and wretchedness. And from all this I conclude, that I ought, therefore, to pass all the days of my life, without considering what is hereafter to befall me; and that I have nothing to do, but to follow my inclinations without reflection or disquiet, in doing all that, which, if what men say of a miserable eternity prove true, will infallibly plunge me into it. It is possible I might find some light to clear up my doubts; but I shall not take a minute's pains, nor stir one foot in the search of it. On the contrary, I am resolved to treat those with scorn and derision who labour in this enquiry and care; and, so to run without fear or foresight, upon the trial of the grand event; permitting myself to be led softly on to death, utterly uncertain as to the eternal issue of my future condition.

In earnest, it is a glory to religion to have so unreasonable men for its professed enemies; and their opposition is of so little danger, that it serves to illustrate the principal truths which our religion teaches. For the main scope of Christian faith is to establish those two principles, the corruption of nature, and the redemption by Jesus Christ. And these opposers, if they are of no use towards demonstrating the truth of the redemption, by the sanctity of their lives, yet are at least admirably useful in shewing the corruption of nature, by so unnatural sentiments and suggestions.

Nothing is so important to any man as his own estate and condition; nothing so great, so amazing, as eternity. If, therefore, we find persons indifferent to the loss of their being, and to the danger of endless misery, it is impossible that this temper should be natural. They are quite other men in all other regards, they fear the smallest inconveniences, they see them as

they approach, and feel them if they arrive, and he who passeth days and nights in chagrin or despair, for the loss of an employment, or for some imaginary blemish in his honour, is the very same mortal who knows that he must lose all by death, and yet remains without disquiet, resentment, or emotion. This wonderful insensibility, with respect to things of the most fatal consequence, in a heart so nicely sensible of the meanest trifles, is an astonishing prodigy, and unintelligible enchantment, a supernatural blindness and insatiation.

A man in a close dungeon, who knows not whether sentence of death has passed upon him, who is allowed but one hour's space to inform himself concerning it, and that one hour sufficient, in case it have passed, to obtain its reverse, would act contrary to nature and sense, should he make use of this hour not to procure information, but to pursue his vanity or sport. And yet such is the condition of the persons whom we are now describing; only with this difference, that the evils with which they are every moment threatened, do infinitely surpass the bare loss of life, and that transient punishment which the prisoner is supposed to apprehend: yet they run thoughtless upon the precipice, having only cast a veil over their eyes, to hinder them from discerning it, and divert themselves with the officiousness of such as charitably warn them of their danger.

Thus not the zeal alone of those who heartily seek God, demonstrates the truth of religion, but likewise the blindness of those who utterly forbear to seek him, and who pass their days under so horrible a neglect. There must needs be a strange turn and revolution in human nature, before men can submit to such a condition, much more ere they can applaud and value themselves upon it. For supposing them to have obtained an absolute certainty, that there was no fear after death, but of falling into nothing, ought not this to be the subject rather of despair, than of jollity? And is it not therefore the highest pitch of senseless extravagance, while we want this certainty, to glory in our doubt and distrust?

And yet, after all, it is too visible, that man has so far declined from his original nature, and as it were departed from himself, to nourish in his heart a secret seed-plot of joy, springing up from the libertine reflections. This brutal ease, or indolence, between the fear of hell, and annihilation,

carries somewhat so tempting in it, that not only those who have the misfortune to be sceptically inclined, but even those who cannot unsettle their judgment, do yet esteem it reputable to take up a counterfeit diffidence. For we may observe the largest part of the herd to be of this latter kind, false pretenders to infidelity, and mere hypocrites in atheism. There are persons whom we have heard declare, that the genteel way of the world consists in thus acting the bravo. This is that which they term throwing off the yoke, and which the greater number of them profess, not so much out of opinion, as out of gallantry and complaisance.

Yet, if they have the least reserve of common sense, it will not be difficult to make them apprehend, how miserably they abuse themselves by laying so false a foundation of applause and esteem. For this is not the way to raise a character, even with worldly men, who, as they are able to pass a shrewd judgment on things, so they easily discern that the only method of succeeding in our temporal affairs, is to prove ourselves honest, faithful, prudent, and capable of advancing the interest of our friends; because men naturally love nothing but that which some way contributes to their use and benefit. But now what benefit can we any way derive from hearing a man confess that he has eased himself of the burden of religion; that he believes no God, as the witness and inspector of his conduct; that he considers himself as absolute master of what he does, and accountable for it only to his own mind? Will he fancy that we shall be hence induced to repose a greater degree of confidence in him hereafter? or to depend on his comfort, his advice, or assistance, in the necessities of life? Can he imagine us to take any great delight or complacency when he tells us, that he doubts whether our very soul be any thing more than a little wind and smoke? Nay, when he tells it us with an air of assurance, and a voice that testifies the contentment of his heart? Is this a thing to be spoken of with pleantry? or ought it not rather be lamented with the deepest sadness, as the most melancholic reflection that can strike our thoughts?

If they would compose themselves to serious consideration, they must perceive the method in which they are engaged to be so very ill chosen, so repugnant to gentility, and so remote even from that good air and

grace which they pursue, that, on the contrary, nothing can more effectually expose them to the contempt and aversion of mankind, or mark them out for persons defective in parts and judgment. And, indeed, should we demand from them an account of their sentiments, and of the reasons which they have to entertain this suspicion in religious matters, what they offered would appear so miserably weak and trifling, as rather to confirm us in our belief. This is no more than what one of their own fraternity told them, with great smartness, on such an occasion, If you continue (says he) to dispute at this rate, you will infallibly make me a Christian. And the gentleman was in the right: for who would not tremble to find himself embarked in the same cause, with so forlorn, so despicable companions?

And thus it is evident, that they who wear no more than the outward mask of these principles, are the most unhappy counterfeits in the world; inasmuch as they are obliged to put a continual force and constraint on their genius, only that they may render themselves the most impertinent of all men living.

If they are heartily and sincerely troubled at their want of light, let them not dissemble the disease. Such a confession could not be reputed shameful; for there is really no shame, but in being shameless. Nothing betrays so much weakness of soul, as not to apprehend the misery of man, while living without God in the world: nothing is a surer token of extreme baseness of spirit, than not to hope for the reality of eternal promises: no man is so stigmatized a coward, as he that acts the bravo against heaven. Let them therefore leave these impieties to those who are born with so unhappy a judgment, as to be capable of entertaining them in earnest. If they cannot be Christian men, let them, however, be men of honour: and let them, in conclusion, acknowledge, that there are but two sorts of persons, who deserve to be styled reasonable, either those who serve God with all their heart, because they know him; or those who seek him with all their heart, because as yet they know him not.

If then there are persons who sincerely enquire after God, and who, being truly sensible of their misery, affectionately desire to be rescued from it; it is to these alone that we can in justice afford our labour and service, for their direction in finding

finding out that light of which they feel the want.

But as for those who live without either knowing God, or endeavouring to know him, they look on themselves as so little deserving their own care, that they cannot but be unworthy the care of others: and it requires all the charity of the religion which they despise, not to despise them to such a degree, as even to abandon them to their own folly: but since the same religion obliges us to consider them, while they remain in this life, as still capable of God's enlightening grace; and to acknowledge it as very possible, that, in the course of a few days, they may be replenished with a fuller measure of faith than we now enjoy; and we ourselves, on the other side, fall into the depths of their present blindness and misery; we ought to do for them, what we desire should be done to us in their case; to intreat them that they would take pity on themselves, and would at least advance a step or two forward, if perchance they may come into the light. For which end it is wished, that they would employ in the perusal of this piece, some few of those hours, which they spend so unprofitably in other pursuits. It is possible they may gain somewhat by the reading; at least, they cannot be great losers: but if any shall apply themselves to it, with perfect sincerity, and with an unfeigned desire of knowing the truth, I despair not of their satisfaction, or of their being convinced by so many proofs of our divine religion, as they will here find laid together.

Monf. Pascal.

§ 171. *Of the temper of mind which is necessary for the discovery of divine truth, and the degree of evidence that ought to be expected in divine matters; with an epitome of reasons for the truth of the Holy Bible.*

If all our knowledge be derived from God, and if it has pleased God to require a certain degree of probity, seriousness, impartiality, and humility of mind, together with hearty prayers to him for his direction, blessing, and assistance; and a proper submission to him, before he will communicate his truths to men; I mean, at least, communicate the same so as shall make a due impression upon their minds, and turn to their real profit and edification, to their true improvement in virtue and happiness; and if men at any time come to the

examination either of the works or word of God, without that temper of mind, and without those addresses for his aid, and submission to his will, which he has determined shall be the conditions of his communications to them; especially if they come with the contrary dispositions, with a wicked, partial, proud, and ludicrous temper, and with an utter disregard to God, his providence, worship, and revelation; all their researches will come to nothing: if, I say, this be the case, as to divine knowledge, as I believe it is, it cannot but be highly necessary for us all to consider of this matter beforehand, and to endeavour after the proper qualifications, before we set ourselves about the main enquiries themselves. If it has also pleased God to expect from us some more defence and regard for him, than for our poor fallible fellow-creatures here below, and to claim our belief and obedience, upon plain external evidence, that certain doctrines or duties are derived from him, without our being always let into the secrets of his government, or acquainted with the reasons of his conduct, and also to expect that this plain external evidence be treated, as it is in all the other cases of human determinations and judgments: I mean, that it be submitted to, and acquiesced in, when it appears to be such as in all other cases would be allowed to be satisfactory, and plainly superior to what is alledged to the contrary; if, I say, this also be the case, as to divine knowledge, as I believe it is, it will be very proper for us all to consider of this matter beforehand also; that so we may not be afterward disappointed, when in our future progress we do not always find that irresistible and overbearing degree of evidence for certain divine truths, which in such cases is not to be had; which in truth is almost peculiar to the mathematics; and the expectation of which is so common, though unjust, a pretence for infidelity among us.

As to the former of these enquiries, or that temper of mind which is necessary for the discovery of divine truth; it can certainly be no other than what the light of nature, and the consciences of men influenced thereby dictate to us; those, I mean, already intimated; such as seriousness, integrity, impartiality, and prayer to God, with the faithful belief, and ready practice of such truths and duties, as we do all along discover to be the word and will of God; together with such a modesty or resignation

of mind, as will rest satisfied in certain sublime points, clearly above our determination, with full evidence that they are revealed by God, without always insisting upon knowing the reasons of the divine conduct therein immediately, before we will believe that evidence. These are such things as all honest and sober men, who have naturally a sense of virtue and of God, in their minds, must own their obligation to. We all know, by the common light of nature, till we eclipse or corrupt it by our own wickedness, that we are to deal with the utmost fairness, honesty, and integrity in all, especially in religious matters; that we are to hearken to every argument, and to consider every testimony without prejudice, or bias, and ever to pronounce agreeably to our convictions; that we are but weak, frail, dependent creatures; all whose faculties, and the exercise of them, are derived from God; that we ought therefore to exercise a due modesty, and practise a due submission of mind in divine matters, particularly in the search after the nature, and laws, and providence of our great Creator; a submission, I mean, not to human, but to divine authority, when once it shall be authentically made known to us, that the humble addressing of ourselves to God for his aid, direction, and blessing on our studies and enquiries, is one plain instance of such our submission to him; and that a ready compliance with divine revelation, and a ready obedience to the divine will, so far as we have clearly discovered it, is another necessary instance of the same humble regard to the divine Majesty. Nor indeed, can any one who comes to these sacred enquiries with the opposite dispositions of dishonesty, partiality, pride, buffoonery, neglect of all divine worship, and contempt of all divine revelation, and of all divine laws, expect, even by the light of nature, that God should be obliged to discover farther divine truths to him. Nor will a sober person, duly sensible of the different states of Creator and creature, imitate Simon Magus, and his followers, in the first ages of the gospel; and set up some metaphysical subtilties, or capacious question, about the conduct of providence, as sufficient to set aside the evidence of confessed miracles themselves; but will rather agree to that wise aphorism laid down in the law of Moses, and supposed all over the Bible; "that secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but things that are revealed, to us and to our children, that we may do them." Deut.

xxix. 29. Now, in order to the making some impressions upon men in this matter, and the convincing them, that all our discoveries are to be derived from God; and that we are not to expect his blessing upon our enquiries without the foregoing qualifications, devotions, and obedience, give me leave here, instead of my own farther reasoning, to set down from the ancient Jewish and Christian writers, several passages which seem to me very remarkable, and very pertinent to our present purpose; not now indeed, as supposing any of those observations of sacred authority, but as very right in themselves; very agreeable to the light of nature; and very good testimonies of the sense of wise men in the several ancient ages of the world to this purpose. And I choose to do this the more largely here, because I think this matter to be of very great importance; because it seems to be now very little known or considered, at least very little practised by several pretended enquirers into revealed religion; and because the neglect hereof seems to me a main occasion of the scepticism and infidelity of this age.

"The Lord spake unto Moses, saying: See, I have called by name Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hür, of the tribe of Judah: and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, &c. And in the hearts of all that are wise-hearted, I have put wisdom, &c." Ex. xxxi. 1, 2, 3, 6.

"It shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee;—the Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart; and thou shalt grope at noon-day, as the blind gropeth in darkness." Deut. xxviii. 13, 28, 29.

"The Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day." Deut. xxix. 4.

"Give thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people; that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge this thy so great a people! And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing:—hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; behold I have done according to thy words; so, I have given thee a wise

a wife and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

—And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king; for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment." 1 Kings, iii. 9, 10, 11, 12, 28.

"I said, days should speak; and multitude of years should teach wisdom. But there is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Job, xxxii. 7, 8.

"Behold in this thou art not just; I will answer thee, that God is greater than man. Why dost thou strive against him? For he giveth not account of any of his matters." Job, xxxiii. 12, 13.

"Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement; I will not offend any more. That which I see not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more." Job, xxxiv. 31, 32.

"God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doth he which we cannot comprehend." Job, xxxvii. 5.

"With God is terrible majesty. Touching the Almighty we cannot find him out; he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict. —Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart." Job, xxxvii. 22, 23, 24.

"Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? Or who hath given understanding unto the heart?" Job, xxxviii. 36.

"Then Job answered the Lord and said; I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. —Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not." Job, xlii. 1, 2, 3.

"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eyesceeth thee. —Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Job, xlii. 5, 6.

"The meek will he guide in judgment: the meek will he teach his way." Psalm, xxv. 9.

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." Psalm, xxv. 14.

"Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies; for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand

more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts. Through thy precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way." Psalm, cxix. 98, 99, 100, 104.

"Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty; neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me." Psalm, cxxxi. 1.

"The Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." Prov. ii. 6.

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Prov. iii. 5, 6.

"The froward is abomination to the Lord: but his secret is with the righteous." Prov. iii. 32.

"God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wisdom, and knowledge, and joy." Eccles. ii. 26.

"God hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart; so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." Eccles. iii. 11.

"Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun; because though a man labour to seek it out: yet he shall not find it; yea further, though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it." Eccles. viii. 17.

"As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom." Dan. i. 17.

"None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." Dan, xii. 10.

"Who is wise, and he shall understand these things; prudent, and he shall know them: for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein." Hos. xiv. 9.

"And the angel that was sent unto me, whose name was Uriel, gave me an answer, and said, thy heart hath gone too far in this world: and thinkest thou to comprehend the way of the Most High?" 2 Esd. iv. 1, 2.

"He said moreover unto me; thine own things, and such as are grown up with thee, canst thou not know, how should thy vessel then be able to comprehend the way of the Highest." 2 Esd. iv. 10, 11.

"They that dwell upon the earth may understand nothing; but that which is upon the earth: and he that dwelleth above the heavens, may only understand the things

that are above the height of the heavens, &c." 2 Eld. iv. 21.

"Into a malicious soul wisdom shall not enter, nor dwell in the body that is subject unto sin, &c." Wisd. i. 41. &c.

"Their own wickedness hath blinded them." Wisd. ii. 21.

"As for the mysteries of God, they know them not." Wisd. ii. 22.

"Wherefore I prayed, and understanding was given me: I called upon God, and the spirit of wisdom came to me." Wisd. vii. 7.

"It is God that leadeth unto wisdom, and directeth the wise. For in his hand are both we and our words; all wisdom also, and knowledge of workmanship." Wisd. vii. 15, 16.

"When I perceived that I could not otherwise obtain wisdom, except God gave her me; (and that was a point of wisdom also, to know whose gift she was) I prayed unto the Lord, and besought him, and with my whole heart I said," Wisd. viii. 21.

"Give me wisdom that sitteth by thy throne, and reject me not from among thy children. For I thy servant, and son of thine handmaid, am a feeble person, and of a short time, and too young for the understanding of judgment and laws. For though a man be never so perfect among the children of men, yet if thy wisdom be not with him, he shall be nothing regarded." Wisd. ix. 4, 5, 6.

"Hardly do we guess aright at things that are upon earth; and with labour do we find the things that are before us: but the things that are in heaven who hath searched out?" Wisd. ix. 9.

"All wisdom cometh from the Lord, and is with him for ever.—She is with all flesh according to his gift; and he hath given her to them that love him." Ec. i. 1, 10.

"If thou desire wisdom, keep the commandments, and the Lord shall give her unto thee. For the fear of the Lord is wisdom and instruction; and faith and meekness are his delight." Ec. i. 26, 27.

"Mysteries are revealed unto the meek.—Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee; neither search the things that are above thy strength. But what is commanded thee, think thereupon with reverence; for it is not needful for thee to see the things that are in secret. Ec. iii. 19, 21, 22.

"Let thy mind be upon the ordinances of the Lord, and meditate continually in his

commandments. He shall establish thine heart, and give thee wisdom at thine own desire." Ec. vi. 37.

"Wisdom, knowledge, and understanding of the law, are of the Lord. Love, and the way of good works, are from him. Error and darkness had their beginning together with sinners." Ec. xi. 15, 16.

"Foolish men shall not attain unto wisdom; and sinners shall not see her. For she is far from pride; and men that are liars cannot remember her." Ec. xv. 7, 8.

"He that keepeth the law of the Lord getteth the understanding thereof; and the perfection of the fear of the Lord is wisdom." Ec. xxi. 11.

"As his ways are plain unto the holy, so are they stumbling-blocks unto the wicked." Ec. xxxix. 24.

"The Lord hath made all things, and to the godly hath he given wisdom." Ec. xliii. 33.

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." John, vii. 17.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. xi. 33.

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.—Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." James i. 5, 17.

Now from all this evidence, and much more that might be alledged, it is apparent, that the Jewish and Christian religions always suppose, that there must be a due temper of mind in the enquirers, or else the arguments for those religions will not have their due effect. That the course of God's providence designs hereby to distinguish between the well-disposed, the meek, the humble, and the pious, which are those whom the common light of nature declares may expect the divine blessing on their studies of this sort; and the ill-disposed, the obstinate, the proud, and the impious; which are those whom the same common light of nature assures us may expect the divine malediction on the same: and that 'tis not for want of convincing and satisfactory evidence in the business of revelation, but because many men come with perverse, sceptical, and wicked dispositions, that they fail of satisfaction therein. Accordingly, I think, it is true, in common observation,

observation, that the virtuous and the religious, I mean those that are such according to natural conscience, do rarely, if ever, fail on their enquiries to embrace and acquiesce in both the Jewish and Christian revelations, and that the debauched and profane do as seldom fail on their enquiries to reject and ridicule them, Which different success of the same examination, agrees exactly with the whole tenor of the Scriptures, and is the very same which must be true, in case those Scriptures be true also; and is, by consequence, a considerable confirmation of their real verity and inspiration. And certainly, he that considers his own weakness and dependence on God, and that all truth and evidence must come originally from him, will by natural judgment and equity pronounce, that he who expects the divine blessing and illumination, in points of such vast consequence, as those of revelation most certainly are, ought above all things to purify his will, and rectify his conduct in such points as all the world knows to be the will of God; and to address himself to the Divine Majesty with due fervency and seriousness, for his aid and assistance, before he can justly promise himself success in so great and momentous an undertaking.

But then, as to the second enquiry, or the degree of evidence that ought to be expected in religious matters, it seems to me very necessary to say somewhat upon this subject also, before we come to our main design. For as on the one side it is a great error in all cases to expect such evidence as the nature of the subject renders impossible; so it is as weak on the other side, to lay the stress of important truths on such evidence, as is in its own nature unsatisfactory and precarious: or to assert with great assurance what can no way be proved, even by that sort of evidence which is proper for the subject in debate. An instance of the first sort we have in Autolicus, an Heathen, in his debates with Theophilus of Antioch; who appears weakly to have insisted upon seeing the God of the Christians, ere he would believe his existence; while one of the known attributes of that God is, that he is invisible. And almost equally preposterous would any philosophic sceptic now be, who should require the sight of the air in which we breathe, before he would believe that there was such an element as all. Whereas it is clear, that the air may be demonstrated to be sufficiently sensible and real, by a thousand

experiments; while yet none of those experiments can render it visible to us: just as the existence of a supreme being may be demonstrated by innumerable arguments, although none of those arguments imply even the possibility of his being properly seen by any of his creatures. But then, that we may keep a mean here, and may neither on one side, expect in our religious enquiries, overbearing, or strictly mathematic evidence, such as is impossible to be denied or doubted of by any; which would render the constant design of providence, already stated, entirely ineffectual, and force both good and bad to be believers, without any regard to their qualifications and temper of mind; nor on the other side, may we depend on such weak and precarious arguments, as are not really sufficient or satisfactory to even fair, honest, and impartial men. I intend here to consider, what that degree of evidence is which ought to be insisted on; without which we are not, and with which we are obliged to acquiesce in divine matters. Now this degree of evidence I take to be that, and no other, which upright judges are determined by in all the important affairs of estate and life that come before them: and according to which, they ever aim to give sentence in their courts of judicature. I choose to instance in this judicial evidence, and these judicial determinations especially, because the persons concerned in such matters are, by long use, and the nature of their employment, generally speaking, the best and most sagacious discoverers of truth, and those that judge the most unbiassedly and fairly, concerning sufficient or insufficient evidence, of all others. Such upright judges then, never expect strictly undeniable, or mathematic evidence; which they know is, in human affairs, absolutely impossible to be had: they don't require that the witnesses they examine should be infallible, or impeccable, which they are sensible would be alike wild and ridiculous; yet do they expect full, sufficient, or convincing evidence; and such as is plainly superior to what is alledged on the other side: and they require that the witnesses they believe, be, so far as they are able to discover, of a good character, upright, and faithful. Nor do they think it too much trouble to use their utmost skill and sagacity in discovering where the truth lies; how far the witnesses agree with or contradict each other; and which way the several circumstances may be best compared,

pared, so as to find out any forgery, or detect any knavery which may be suspected in any branches of the evidence before them. They do not themselves pretend to judge of the reality or obligation of any ancient laws, or acts of parliament, from their own meer guesses or inclinations, but from the authenticity of the records which contain them, and though they are not able always to see the reason, or occasion, or wisdom of such laws, or acts of parliament; yet do they, upon full external evidence that they are genuine, allow and execute the same, as considering themselves to be not legislators, but judges; and owning that ancient laws, and ancient facts, are to be known not by guesses or supposals, but by the production of ancient records, and original evidence for their reality. Nor in such their procedure do they think themselves guilty in their sentences, if at any time afterwards they discover that they have been imposed upon by false witnesses, or forged records; supposing, I mean, that they are conscious, that they did their utmost to discover the truth, and went exactly by the best evidence that lay before them; as knowing they have done their duty, and must in such a case be blameless before God and man, notwithstanding the mistake in the sentences themselves. Now this is that procedure which I would earnestly recommend to those that have a mind to enquire to good purpose into revealed religion: that after they have taken care to purge themselves from all those vices which will make it their great interest that religion should be false; after they have resolved upon honesty, impartiality, and modesty, which are virtues by the law of nature; after they have devoutly implored the divine assistance and blessing on this their important undertaking; which is a duty likewise they are obliged to by the same law of nature; that after all this preparation, I say, they will set about the enquiry itself, in the very same manner that has been already described, and that all our upright judges proceed by in the discovery of truth. Let them spare for no pains, but consult all the originals, whenever they can come at them; and let them use all that diligence, sagacity, and judgment, which they are masters of, in order to see what real external evidence there is for the truth of the facts on which the Jewish and Christian religions do depend. I here speak of the truth of facts, as the surest way to determine us in this enquiry; because all the world,

I think, owns, that if those facts be true, these institutions of religion must also be true, or be derived from God; and that no particular difficulties, as to the reasons of several laws, or the conduct of providence in several cases, which those institutions no where pretend to give us a full account of, can be sufficient to set aside the convincing evidence which the truth of such facts brings along with it. For example: Those who are well satisfied of the truth of the Mosaic history; of the ten miraculous plagues with which the God of Israel smote the Egyptians; of the drowning of the Egyptians in the Red sea, while the Israelites were miraculously conducted through the same; and of the amazing manner wherein the decalogue was given by God to that people at mount Sinai; will for certain, believe that the Jewish religion was in the main derived from God, though he should find several occasional passages in the Jewish sacred books, which he could not account for, and several ritual laws given that nation, which he could not guess at the reasons why they were given them. And the case is the very same as to the miraculous resurrection, and glorious ascension of our blessed Saviour, Jesus Christ, with regard to the New Testament: on which account I reckon that the truth of such facts is to be principally enquired into, when we have a mind to satisfy ourselves in the verity of the Jewish and Christian religions. And if it be alledged that some of these facts are too remote to afford us any certain means of discovery at this distance of time; I answer, That then we are to select such of those facts as we can examine, and to search into the acknowledgment or denial of those that are ancienter, in the oldest testimonies now extant; into the effects and consequences, and standing memorials of such facts in after ages, and how far they were real, and allowed to be so; and in short, we are to determine concerning them, by the best evidence we can now have; and not let a bare suspicion, or a wish that things had been otherwise, overbalance our real evidence of facts in any case whatsoever. I do not mean that our enquirer is to have no regard to internal characters, or the contents of the Jewish and Christian revelations; or that he is not to examine into that also in the general, before he admits even the proof from miracles themselves; because what pretended miracles soever are wrought, for the support of idolatry, or wickedness; for the esta-

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blissment of notions contrary to the divine attributes, or of an immoral, or profane, or cruel religion, though they may prove such a religion to be supernatural, yet will they only prove that it comes from wicked demons, or evil spirits, and not from a God of purity and holiness, and so will by no means prove it divine, or worthy of our reception. But then, it is, for the main, so well known, that the Jewish and Christian institutions do agree to the divine attributes, and do tend to purity, holiness, justice and charity; and are opposite to all immorality, profaneness, and idolatry, that I think there will not need much examination in so clear a case; and that, by consequence, our main enquiry is to be as to the truth of the facts thereto relating. And in this case, I fear not to invite all our sceptics and unbelievers, to use their greatest nicety, their entire skill, their shrewdest abilities, and their utmost sagacity in this enquiry; being well assured from my own observations in this matter, that the proper result of such an exact historical enquiry will be as plainly and evidently on the side of revealed religion.

There is such an inimitable air of sincerity, honesty, and impartiality, in the sacred historians; the ancient profane testimonies still extant do so generally attest to, and confirm the facts, so far as they are concerned; the most ancient predictions have been all along so exactly and wonderfully fulfilled; the characters of the Messias in the Old Testament have been so particularly answered in the New; our Lord's own predictions, and those of St. Paul and St. John have been all along hitherto so surprisingly accomplished, the epistles of the apostles, and the history and sufferings of them and of their immediate successors, do so fully confirm the miracles and circumstances belonging to the first times of the Gospel; that he who acquaints himself originally with these things, if he come with an untainted and honest mind, cannot easily be other than a believer and a Christian.

I cannot but heartily wish, for the common good of all the sceptics and unbelievers of this age, that I could imprint in their minds all that real evidence for natural and for revealed religion that now is, or during my past enquiries has been upon my own mind thereto relating; and that their temper of mind were such as that this evidence might afford them as great satisfaction as it has myself. But though this entire communication of the evidence that is, or has

been in my own mind, for the certainty of natural religion, and of the Jewish and Christian institutions, be, in its own nature, impossible; yet, I hope, I may have leave to address myself to all, especially to the sceptics and unbelievers of our age; to do what I am able for them in this momentous concern; and to lay before them, as briefly and seriously as I can, a considerable number of those arguments which have the greatest weight with me, as to the hardest part of what is here desired and expected from them; I mean the belief of revealed religion, or of the Jewish and Christian institutions, as contained in the books of the Old and New Testament.—But to wave farther preliminaries, some of the principal reasons which make me believe the Bible to be true are the following:

1. The Bible lays the law of nature for its foundation; and all along supports and assists natural religion; as every true revelation ought to do.

2. Astronomy, and the rest of our certain mathematic sciences; do confirm the accounts of Scripture; so far as they are concerned.

3. The most ancient and best historical accounts now known, do, generally speaking, confirm the accounts of Scripture; so far as they are concerned.

4. The more learning has encreased; the more certain in general do the Scripture accounts appear, and its difficult places are more cleared thereby.

5. There are, or have been generally, standing memorials preserved of the certain truths of the principal historical facts, which were constant evidences for the certainty of them.

6. Neither the Mosaic law, nor the Christian religion, could possibly have been received and established without such miracles as the sacred history contains.

7. Although the Jews all along hated and persecuted the prophets of God; yet were they forced to believe they were true prophets, and their writings of divine inspiration.

8. The ancient and present state of the Jewish nation are strong arguments for the truth of their law, and of the Scripture prophecies relating to them.

9. The ancient and present states of the Christian church are also strong arguments for the truth of the Gospel, and of the Scripture prophecies relating thereto.

10. The miracles whereon the Jewish and Christian religion are founded, were

of old owned to be true by their very enemies.

11. The sacred writers, who lived in times and places so remote from one another, do yet all carry on one and the same grand design, viz. that of the salvation of mankind, by the worship of, and obedience to the one true God, in and through the King Messiah; which, without a divine conduct, could never have been done.

12. The principal doctrines of the Jewish and Christian religion are agreeable to the most ancient traditions of all other nations.

13. The difficulties relating to this religion are not such as affect the truth of the facts, but the conduct of providence, the reasons of which the sacred writers never pretended fully to know, or to reveal to mankind.

14. Natural religion, which is yet so certain in itself, is not without such difficulties, as to the conduct of providence, as are objected to revelation.

15. The sacred history has the greatest marks of truth, honesty and impartiality, of all other histories whatsoever; and withal has none of the known marks of knavery and imposture.

16. The predictions of Scripture have been still fulfilled in the several ages of the world whereto they belong.

17. No opposite systems of the universe, or schemes of divine revelation, have any tolerable pretences to be true, but those of the Jews and Christians.

These are the plain and obvious arguments which persuade me of the truth of the Jewish and Christian revelations.

Whiston.

§ 172. *The divine Legation of Moses.*

The evidence the Jews had to believe the several matters related by Moses, preceding the deliverance from Egypt, was, so far as we know, no more than Moses's word; whose credit was sufficiently established, by the testimonies given to him by the Deity; but, at the same time, it is not certain that they had not some distinct tradition concerning these things. But, as to his authority, and the authority of the laws and institutions given by him, they had, and their children, and we who take it from their children, have the strongest evidence the nature of the thing is capable of. For,

1. The whole people, an infinite multitude, were witnesses of all the miracles wrought preceding the deliverance from

Egypt, and of the final miracle that achieved their deliverance; in memory whereof, the passover, an annual solemnity, was instituted, with the strongest injunctions to acquaint their children with the cause of that observance, and to mark that night throughout all their generations for ever.

2. The whole people were witnesses to the miracle in passing the Red Sea, and sung that hymn which Moses composed on that occasion, which was preserved for the use of their children.

3. The whole people were witnesses to the dreadful promulgation of the law from Sinai, with which they were also to acquaint their children; and the feast of Pentecost was annually to be observed on the day on which that law was given; besides that the very tables in which the ten commands were written, were deposited in the Ark, and remained, at least, till the building of Solomon's temple, and probably till the destruction of it.

4. The whole people were witnesses to the many miracles wrought, during the space of forty years, in the wilderness: to the pillar of fire and cloud, to the manna, quails, &c. a sample of the manna remained to future generations: and they were directed to relate what they saw to their children.

5. The whole people were witnesses to the framing and building of the Ark, and Tabernacle; they were all contributors to it; they saw the cloud fill and rest upon it, and they assisted at the services performed there; and, to commemorate this, as well as their sojourning in tents in the wilderness, the annual feast of Tabernacles was appointed, which in succeeding years, they were to explain to their children.

As these things were absolutely sufficient to satisfy the children of Israel, then in being, touching the authority and obligation of this law, several things were added to enforce the observance, and to preserve the memory and evidence of what was to be observed.

1. The law was by Moses, at the command of God, put into writing, for the greater certainty, as well as all the directions for making the Ark, the Cherubim, the Tabernacle, the priest's garments, &c. and all the rules of government, judicature, &c. with every other circumstance revealed, for directing the faith and the conduct of the nation.

2. The law was to be preserved, perused, and attended to, in the most careful

manner;

manner; the priests, who were to judge in questions relating to it, must be well versed in it; the king, who was to rule over the nation, was to write out a copy of it for himself, and to peruse it continually; and the people were to write out passages of it, and to wear them by way of signs, upon their hands, and of frontlets, between their eyes, and to write them upon the post of their doors, &c. And they were to teach their children the most notable parts of it, and particularly to instruct them in the miracles attending the deliverance from Egypt, as they sat in their house, as they walked by the way, as they lay down, and as they rose up, &c.

3. Besides the authority that promulgated the law, there was a solemn covenant and agreement between God and the people, whereby the people became bound to keep, preserve, and observe this law, and all that was contained in it: and God became bound to be the God of the Israelitish people, to protect, and prosper them; and this covenant, towards the end of their sojourning in the wilderness, was solemnly renewed.

4. The particulars of this covenant, upon God's part, were, to give the people the good land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey, to preserve, and protect them in it; to give them perpetual indurance, and victory over their and his enemies; to prosper them in all their labours; to give them the increase of their fields, and flocks; and to make them a great, a happy, and a flourishing people; on condition that they kept and obeyed his law.

5. The particulars, on the part of the people, were, to serve Jehovah, and no other God, in the way directed by the law; to preserve, observe, and obey the law carefully, and exactly; and if they failed or transgressed, to submit and consent to the severe sanction of the law and covenant, which, in many instances, was, to individuals transgressing, death (to be cut off from the people) and to the bulk of the people, destruction, captivity, dispersion, blindness, madness, &c. besides the forfeiture of all the good promises.

6. Besides the other blessings, and pre-eminences, God was, by some special visible symbol of his presence, to reside continually with the people; first, in the Tabernacle, which was made in the wilderness for that end, and afterwards in the temple; whence he was to give judgment

and directions, and to answer prayers, and accept of vows.

7. This covenant was also reduced into writing, and was the tenure by which the Israelites held the land of Canaan, and on which all their hopes were founded: wherefore it must in all generations be considered by them as a thing of no small moment.

As God was the head of this state, and as the people held immediately their land of him; so he made several regulations for holding that property, that are very remarkable.

1. The land was by his command divided into twelve lots, one for each tribe; and they were put in possession accordingly, to the exclusion of the tribe of Levi, who for their portion had no more than what attended the service of God's house, and some cities with suburbs, dispersed amongst other tribes.

2. Not only were the descendants of each tribe to enjoy, in exclusion of other tribes, their own lot, but the particular fields and parcels, within each tribe, were to remain for ever with the respective families that first possessed them, and on failure of the issue of the possessor, to the nearest of that family: hence all lands sold returned at the jubilee to the proprietor, or his nearest a-kin; he who had a right to revenge blood might redeem.

3. This right of blood, depending upon knowledge of descent and genealogy, made it absolutely necessary for the children of Israel to keep very exact records and proofs of their descent; not to mention the expectation they had of something surprisingly singular from the many promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that the blessing to mankind should spring from their Seed; and, in tracing their genealogy, we see they were very critical, upon their return from Babylon: so that, before their records were disturbed by the captivity, it could not well be otherwise, but that every body of any note amongst the Jews could tell you the name of his ancestor, who first had the family-possession, in the days of Joshua, and how many degrees, and by what descent he was removed from him. And as these first possessors, pursuant to the custom of the nation, must have been described by their father's name, 'tis highly probable, they could have quoted by name that ancestor who saw the miracles in Egypt, who saw the law given, who entered

tered into the covenant, and who contributed to the setting up the Ark and Tabernacle.

4. The very surprising care taken by the Deity to keep the breed of the Jews pure and genuine, by the proofs of virginity, and by the miraculous waters of jealousy, is a circumstance that merits attention, and will easily induce a belief that descent and birth was a matter much minded amongst them. And,

5. The appointment and observance of the sabbatical year, and, after the seventh sabbatical year, a year of jubilee, for the general release of debts, lands, &c. is a circumstance of great moment, not only as these notable periods were useful towards the easy computation of time, but as it made enquiry into titles, and consequently genealogy, necessary every fiftieth year; and as the cessation from culture every seventh year gave continual occasions for the Deity's displaying his power in increasing the crop of the sixth, pursuant to his promise.

Now, taking these circumstances together under consideration, could any human precaution have provided more means to keep up the memory and evidence of any fact? Could this have been done by human foresight or force? Has any thing like to it ever been in the world besides?

What could tend more to perpetuate the memory of any event, than to deliver a whole people, by public glorious miracles, from intolerable slavery? To publish a very extraordinary system of laws immediately from heaven? To put this law in writing together with the covenant for the obeying it? To make the tenure of the estates depend on the original division of the land, to men who saw the miracles, and first took possession, and on the proximity of relation, by descent to them? To appoint a return of lands every fiftieth year, which should give perpetual occasion to canvass those descents? To order a sabbath every seventh year for the land, the loss of which should be supplied by the preceding year's increase? And to select a whole tribe consisting of many thousands, to be the guardians, in some degree the judges and the executors of this law; who were barred from any portion of the land, in common with their brethren, and were contented with the contributions that came from the other tribes, without any fixed portion amongst them. This must keep up the belief and au-

thority of that law amongst the descendants of that people, or nothing could: and if such a belief, under all these circumstances, prevailed amongst a people so constituted, that belief could not possibly proceed from imposture; because the very means provided, for proof of the truth, are so many checks against any possibility of imposition.

If any man will suggest that the law of the Jews is no more than human invention, and that the book of the law is a forgery; let him say when it was imposed upon that people, or at what period it could have possibly been imposed upon them, so as to gain belief, later than the period they mention, and under other circumstances than those they relate.

Could the whole people have been persuaded at any one period, by any impostor, that they were told severally by their fathers, and they by theirs, that the law was given with such circumstances, and under such promises, and threats, if they were not really told so; or that they, throughout all their generations, had worn certain passages of the law by way of frontlets and signs, if it had not really been so?

Could the whole people have been persuaded to submit to the pain of death, upon all the offences which the law makes capital, unless their fathers had done so, upon the evidence of the authority of that law?

Could the whole people have been persuaded that they had kept exact genealogies, in order to entitle them to the blessing, and to the inheritances severally, unless they actually had done so?

Could the whole people believe that they had kept passovers, feasts of tabernacles, &c. down from the date of the law, commemorative of the great events they relate to, unless they had really done so?

Could the children of Israel have been imposed on to receive an Ark, and a Tabernacle, then forged, and a compleat set of service and liturgy, as descending from Moses by the direction of God, unless that Ark and that service had come to them from their ancestors, as authorized by God?

Could the whole people have submitted to pay tithes, first fruits, &c. upon any feigned revelation? Or, could the tribe of Levi, without divine authority, have submitted, not only to the being originally without a portion in Israel, but to the being incapable of any, in hopes of the contributions of the people; which however large when the whole twelve tribes served at the

same

same temple, became very scanty when ten of them withdrew their allegiance from heaven?

Could ever the book of the law, if consigned to the Levites, and promulgated, have been lost, so as to give room for new fictions? Or could a book of the law have been forged, if there was none precedent, and put upon the people, as a book that had been delivered to the Levites by Moses? If no book at all ever was delivered by him to them, what authority could be pretended for such a book?

Had a book been to be forged, in order to be received by the people, could it have contained so many scandalous reflections and accusations against the people, and so many fatal threats and predictions concerning them? and, if it had been so framed, could it have been received as authentic?

If the law, &c. was forged, it must have been before the days of David: because by the sacred hymns, in his time, the publication of the law is celebrated, and the law was observed; and yet the time between the entry of Israel into the land, and the reign of David, being but about four hundred years, is too short a space for forgetting the real manner of the entry, and forging another, to be received by a people, whose genealogy was so fixed, and whose time was reckoned by such periods.

If the book of the law was not forged before the reign of David, it could not possibly be forged after, unless the whole history of the kingdom, the tabernacle, the temple, and all the sacred hymns and prophecies, are looked upon as one compleat fiction; because the tabernacle, the temple, the economy of the kingdom, the sacred hymns, and all the other writings said to be sacred, bear formal relation to the law.

But, that all these things were not suppositious, is evident from the anxious zeal that possessed the Jews who returned from the captivity; from their solicitude to restore the city, the temple and the sacred service; from their strict examination of their genealogies, and scrupulous care to comply with the law.

The space between the captivity and the return was so short, that some who saw the first temple, saw also the second, and many who were themselves, or at least whose fathers had been, officers in the first temple, returned to the service of the second: so that it is utterly impossible that

the history, the liturgy, the service of the Jews, preceding the return, should be a fiction, at least that it should be a fiction earlier than the return.

And the story of this nation, from that period, falls in so much with the history of the rest of the world; their sacred books have been so soon after that translated, and they have been so famous for the tenaciousness of their laws, that there is no possibility of suspecting that their law and history was forged later than the return. And, if it is granted, that the devotions, the precepts, the institutions, and rites and ceremonies of this law, and the great lines of their history, are not forged; one needs, as to the present consideration, be but little solicitous concerning the accuracy of the copy of the books of the law, and of the other sacred books; and whether there may not have been some mistake and interpolations. It is not with one or one hundred words or sentences we have to do; it is with the system of the sacrifice, and the other religious laws and services of the Jews, and with the political establishment of their theocratical government, and the authority for the establishment of both, that we have, at present, concern.

For, if such a system of religious services and ceremonies was revealed and commanded by God, if, for the greater certainty, it was reduced into writing by Moses, by divine direction; if such a model of government was framed, as is manifestly calculated for keeping up the observance of those services, and preserving the memory of the institution, and keeping up the authority of the book wherein it was recorded; and if the nation, to whom this institution was delivered, have preserved it accordingly: compleat evidence thence arises to us of the divinity of the institution; and leads to a demonstrative proof of the truth of the Christian religion, to which all the emblematical institutions tend, and in which they center.

Lord Forbes.

§ 173. *On the Old and New Testament.*

The Old Testament hath, by the general consent of learned men, all the marks of purest antiquity; there being nothing in the world which in this respect is equal to it, or which may pretend to be compared with it; all other the most ancient monuments of antiquity coming short of it by many ages. It was written in the first

and

and most ancient language; from which the very alphabets and letters of all other languages were derived.

This book contains, as the most ancient, so the most exact story of the world, the propagation of men, and the dispersing of families into the several parts of the earth.

And though this book were written in several ages and places, by several persons; yet doth the doctrine of it accord together, with a most excellent harmony, without any dissonance or inconsistency.

And for the manner of delivering the things contained in it, 'tis so solemn, reverend and majestic, so exactly suited to the nature of things, as may justly provoke our wonder and acknowledgment of its divine original.

And as for the New Testament; those various correspondences, which it bears to the chief things of the Old Testament, may sufficiently evidence that mutual relation, dependance, and affinity which there is between them. That in such an age there was such a man as Christ, who preached such a doctrine, wrought many miracles, suffered an ignominious death, and was afterwards worshipped as God, having abundance of disciples and followers, at first chiefly amongst the vulgar, but a while after, amongst several of the most wise and learned men; who in a short space of time did propagate their belief and doctrine into the most remote parts of the world: I say, all this is for the truth of the matter of fact, not so much as doubted or called into question, by Julian, or Celsus, or the Jews themselves, or any other of the most avowed enemies of Christianity. But we have it by as good certainty as any rational man can wish or hope for, that is, by universal testimony, as well of enemies as friends.

And if these things were so, as to the matter of fact, the common principles of nature will assure us, that 'tis not consistent with the nature of the Deity, his truth, wisdom, or justice, to work such miracles in confirmation of a lie or imposture.

Nor can it be reasonably objected that these miracles are now ceased; and we have not any such extraordinary way to confirm the truth of our religion. 'Tis sufficient that they were upon the first plantation of it, when men were to be instituted and confirmed in that new doctrine. And there may be as much of

the wisdom of providence in the forbearing them now, as in working them then; it being not reasonable to think that the universal laws of nature, by which things are to be regularly guided in their natural course, should frequently, or upon every little occasion, be violated or disordered.

To which may be added that wonderful way whereby this religion hath been propagated in the world, with much simplicity and infirmity in the first publishers of it; without arms, or faction, or favour of great men, or the persuasions of philosophers or orators; only by the naked proposal of plain evident truth, with a firm resolution of suffering and dying for it, by which it hath subdued all kind of persecutions and oppositions, and surmounted whatever discouragement or resistance could be laid in its way, or made against it.

The excellency of the things contained in the Gospel are also so suitable to a rational being, as no other religion or profession whatsoever hath thought of, or so expressly insisted upon.

Some of the learned Heathens have placed the happiness of man in the external sensual delights of this world:

Others of the wiser Heathens have spoken sometimes doubtfully concerning a future state, and therefore have placed the reward of virtue, in the doing of virtuous things. Virtue is its own reward. Wherein, though there be much of truth, yet it doth not afford encouragement enough for the vast desires of a rational soul.

Others who have owned a state after this life, have placed the happiness of it in gross and sensual pleasures, feasts and gardens, and company, and other such low and gross enjoyments.

Whereas the doctrine of Christianity doth fix it upon things that are much more spiritual and sublime; the beatific vision, a clear unerring understanding, a perfect tranquillity of mind, a conformity to God, a perpetual admiring and praising of him; than which the mind of man cannot fancy any thing that is more excellent or desirable.

As to the duties that are enjoined in reference to divine worship, they are so full of sanctity and spiritual devotion, as may shame all the pompous solemnities of other religions, in their costly sacrifices, their dark wild mysteries, and external

observances.

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observances. Whereas this refers chiefly to the holiness of the mind, resignation to God, love of him, dependance upon him, submission to his will, endeavouring to be like him.

And as for the duties of the second table, which concern our mutual conversation towards one another, it allows nothing that is hurtful or noxious, either to ourselves or others; forbids all kind of injury or revenge; commands to overcome evil with good; to pray for enemies and persecutors; doth not admit of any mental, much less any corporal uncleanness; doth not tolerate any immodest or uncomely word or gesture; forbids us to wrong others in their goods and possessions, or to mispend our own; requires us to be very tender both of our own and other men's reputation; in brief, it enjoins nothing but what is helpful, and useful, and good for mankind. Whatever any philosophers have prescribed concerning their moral virtues of temperance, and prudence, and patience, and the duties of several relations, is here enjoined, in a far more eminent, sublime, and comprehensive manner: besides such examples and incitations to piety as are not to be paralleled elsewhere: the whole system of its doctrines being transcendently excellent, and so exactly conformable to the highest purest reason, that in those very things wherein it goes beyond the rules of moral philosophy, we cannot in our best judgment but consent to submit to it.

In brief; it doth in every respect so fully answer the chief scope and design of religion in giving all imaginable honour and submission to the Deity, promoting the good of mankind, satisfying and supporting the mind of man with the highest kind of enjoyments, that a rational soul can wish or hope for, as no other religion or profession whatsoever can pretend unto.

Infidels pretend want of clear and infallible evidence for the truth of Christianity; than which nothing can be more absurd and unworthy of a rational man. For let it be but impartially considered; what is it, that such men would have? Do they expect mathematical proof and certainty in moral things? Why, they may as well expect to see with their ears, and hear with their eyes: such kind of things being altogether as disproportioned to such kind of proofs, as the objects of the several senses are to one another. The arguments

or proof to be used in several matters are of various and different kinds, according to the nature of the things to be proved. And it will become every rational man to yield to such proofs, as the nature of the thing which he enquires about is capable of: and that man is to be looked upon as froward and contentious, who will not rest satisfied in such kind of evidence as is counted sufficient, either by all others, or by most, or by the wisest men.

If we suppose God to have made any revelation of his will to mankind, can any man propose or fancy any better way for conveying down to posterity the certainty of it, than that clear and universal tradition which we have for the history of the Gospel? And must not that man be very unreasonable, who will not be content with as much evidence for an ancient book or matter of fact, as any thing of that nature is capable of? If it be only infallible and mathematical certainty that can settle his mind, why should he believe that he was born of such parents, and belongs to such a family? 'Tis possible men might have combined together to delude him with such a tradition. Why may he not as well think, that he was born a Prince and not a subject, and consequently deny all duties of subjection and obedience to those above him? There is nothing so wild and extravagant, to which men may not expose themselves by such a kind of nice and scrupulous incredulity.

Whereas, if to the enquiries about religion a man would but bring with him the same candour and ingenuity, the same readiness to be instructed, which he doth to the study of human arts and sciences, that is, a mind free from violent prejudices and a desire of contention; it can hardly be imagined, but that he must be convinced and subdued by those clear evidences, which offer themselves to every inquisitive mind, concerning the truth of the principles of religion in general, and concerning the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, and the Christian religion.

Bishop Wilkins.

§ 174. *Chief design, and principal intention of the civil government of the Hebrews.*

To lay down a true plan of the Hebrew government, it will be requisite previously to consider, what particular views the lawgiver might have in it. If any particular ends were designed, to promote which the plan of the government itself was

to be adjusted; those designs will help to explain many parts and constitutions of the government, as it will shew the great wisdom of the legislator, which has made the plan in its several parts most fit, and proper to serve, and secure those ends.

The Hebrew government appears not only designed to serve the common and general ends of all good governments; to protect the property, liberty, safety, and peace of the several members of the community, in which the true happiness and prosperity of national societies will always consist; but moreover to be an holy people to Jehovah, and a kingdom of priests. For thus Moses is directed to tell the children of Israel, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore if you will hear my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine, and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation." We learn what this covenant was in a further account of it. "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God, your captains of your tribes, your elders and your officers, and all the men of Israel; that you should enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day; that he may establish thee to-day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and to Jacob: for ye know," adds Moses, "how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the nations which ye passed by; and ye have seen their abominations and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold which were among them, lest there should be among you, man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God to go and serve the Gods of these nations."

Without any enquiry into the critical meaning of these expressions severally, every one may easily see this general intention of them; that the covenant of Jehovah with the Hebrew people, and their oath by which they bound their allegiance to Jehovah their God and King, was, that they should receive and obey the laws which he should appoint as their

supreme governor, with a particular engagement to keep themselves from the idolatry of the nations round about them; whether the idolatry they had seen while they dwelt in the land of Egypt, or had observed in the nations by which they passed into the promised land. In keeping this allegiance to Jehovah, as their immediate and supreme Lord, they were to expect the blessings of God's immediate and particular protection in the security of their liberty, peace, and prosperity, against all attempts of their idolatrous neighbours; but if they should break their allegiance to Jehovah, or forsake the covenant of Jehovah, by going and serving other Gods and worshipping them, then they should forfeit these blessings of God's protection, and the anger of Jehovah should be kindled against the land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book.

The true sense then of this solemn transaction, between God and the Hebrew nation, which may be called the original contract of the Hebrew government, is to this purpose: If the Hebrews would voluntarily consent to receive Jehovah for their Lord and King, to keep his covenant and laws, to honour and worship him as the one true God, in opposition to all idolatry; then, though God as sovereign of the world rules over all the nations of the earth, and all the nations are under the general care of his providence, he would govern the Hebrew nation by peculiar laws of his particular appointment, and bless it with a more immediate and particular protection; he would secure to them the invaluable privileges of the true religion, together with liberty, peace and prosperity, as a favoured people above all other nations. It is for very wise reasons you may observe, that temporal blessings and evils are made so much use of in this constitution, for these were the common and prevailing enticements to idolatry; but by thus taking them into the Hebrew constitution, as rewards to obedience, and punishments of disobedience, they became motives to true religion, instead of encouragements to idolatry.

The idolatrous nations worshipped subordinate beings, whom they owned subject to the Supreme; but they believed they had the immediate direction of the blessings of life; that they gave health, long life, fruitful seasons, plenty, and prosperity.

rity. This we are told by Maimonides, was a doctrine taught by the Sabians in their books, as well as in their instructions to the people.

One of the oldest of the prophets has so fully expressed this reason of the Hebrew constitution, that we need no further evidence of it. "For their mother hath played the harlot, she that conceived them hath done shamefully; for she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool, and my flax, mine oil, and my drink. For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal. Therefore will I return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof; and will recover my wool and my flax, given to cover her nakedness."

The prophet Jeremiah gives the same reason why the Jews fell into the idolatrous practice of burning incense to the queen of heaven: "But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouths to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto her, as we have done; we, and our fathers, our kings and our princes in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem; for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil; but since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine."

This common doctrine of idolatry, that the several blessings of life came from some demon or idol, to whom the authority and power of bestowing temporal blessings were committed, was of so general and powerful influence, that it became the wisdom of an institution designed to preserve the faith and worship of the one true God, against idolatry, to assert that God was the author of every blessing of life, that he had not parted with the administration of providence, or given over the disposal of those blessings to any subordinate beings whatsoever; so that health, long life, plenty and all kinds of prosperity, were to be sought for, from him, as his gift, and only from his blessing and protection.

Whoever has just notions of the great evils of idolatry to the dishonour of the supreme Sovereign and Governor of the world, to the corruption of the essential

principles of true religion and virtuous practice, as idolatry directed so many barbarous, immoral and inhuman rites, and encouraged such enormous acts of vice, as acts of religion, of which some or other of the idols they worshipped were examples, and were esteemed to patronize them; it will appear to them a design worthy the goodness, as well as the wisdom of God, to put some stop to such a dangerous evil: especially when it was so general and prevailing, that all flesh had corrupted its way, and all the nations of the earth were running eagerly into it. Even the Egyptians, a people so famed for wisdom and good understanding, were as senseless and as corrupt in their idolatry, as any of their neighbours. The Hebrews themselves, whatever former care had been taken to preserve the knowledge of the true God and true religion in the family of Abraham, were so addicted to this common corruption of religion, and were so ready to fall into it, that there seemed no other way left to put any stop to the progress of idolatry any where, or to preserve the true religion in any people, but by some constitution formed on this plan, and which might effectually carry on this design in the several parts of it. And this the goodness and wisdom of God made a principal design in the constitution of the Jewish government.

More effectually to answer this chief design, there was another subordinate intention in the constitution of this government. It was of no small consequence to keep this nation separate from other nations, and from such intercourse with idolaters as might end in an apostacy from their own religion to the idolatry of their neighbours. There is then a law in general given by Moses, in which he is directed to say in God's name to the children of Israel, "I am the Lord your God, after the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do; and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do; neither shall ye walk in their ordinances, ye shall do my judgments and keep my ordinances to walk herein; I am Jehovah your God."

Further, Moses having recited the many and great abominations committed by the Canaanites, on the loss of the right knowledge of the one true God and of the true religion; and through the corruption of idolatrous doctrines and practices, it is added; "Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations

are defiled, which I cast out before you." And again; "therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs which were committed before you, that ye defile not yourselves therein; I am Jehovah your God." For the same purpose it is repeated; "and ye shall not walk in the manners of the nations which I cast out before you, for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them; but I have said unto you, ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it; a land that floweth with milk and honey. I am the Lord your God which hath separated you from other people, and ye shall be holy unto me; for I the Lord am holy, and have separated you from other people that ye should be mine."

It had appeared by notorious examples, how easily the Hebrews themselves were to be enticed into idolatry, by frequenting the company of idolaters, and by conversing too much and too familiarly with them, while Israel abode in Shittim; "the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab, and they called the people to the sacrifice of their gods; and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods;" so easy was the passage from feasting with them on their sacrifices, to joining with them in their idolatry. "Thus Israel joined himself to Baal-peor."

Such an example of prevailing idolatry, is justly given, as a sufficient reason for a careful separation of the Hebrew people from idolatrous neighbours, in order to prevent so very dangerous temptations in future times. Moses therefore thus exhorts Israel, "Your eyes have seen what the Lord did, because of Baal-peor, the Lord thy God hath destroyed them from among you; but ye that did cleave unto the Lord your God, are alive every one of you this day. Behold I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding, in the sight of all the nations which shall hear of all these statutes, and say, surely this great nation is a great and understanding people."

Among the laws here spoken of, there are some, the wisdom of which appear principally, if not solely, as they were chosen and commanded to this end, to separate the Hebrews from their idolatrous neighbours,

by a prohibition of every idolatrous rite. The law itself for prohibiting inter-marriages with idolaters expressly gives this reason for it, "Neither shall you make marriages with them, thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son; for they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods; so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you and destroy thee suddenly."

Many other laws, which at first view seem to be of small importance and concern, for the enacting of which some look for no reason at all, but the alone will of the law-giver, will appear in this view, of concern and importance, sufficient for the wisdom of God to take notice of, when he gave his laws to this nation. The most judicious of the Hebrew doctors, has very well explained several of the Mosaic laws upon this single consideration.

He gives this general reason for many laws, that they were made to keep men from idolatry, and such false opinions as are a-kin to idolatry; such as the pretences to incantations, divinations, foretelling things by the stars, or by the possession of some spirit or demon, or consulting with such persons. He farther justly observes, that such things as are supposed to be effected by any magic actions, or are founded on any dispositions or influences of the stars, necessarily induce men to reverence and worship them. He observes many of the magic rites consisted in certain gestures, actions, or the use of certain words, and mentions several examples of such superstitions; among the rest a remarkable rite to prevent a storm of hail.

However trifling some of the Mosaic laws may appear at first view, and unworthy the wisdom of God to enact them as laws; yet the case will appear quite otherwise, when they are considered as necessary provisions against the danger of idolatry.

The law, for instance, that appoints, "Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard," will thus appear directions of importance, when it was to prevent a magical custom of the idolatrous priests, who made this sort of cutting off their hair and beards essential to their worship; and used them as things of consequence, in order to procure from their idols the several blessings they desired and prayed for. A prohibition of such idolatrous and magical ceremonies was not so trivial, or below the

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care of a wise Law-giver, who had a design in the constitution of the Hebrew government, to keep that people from all idolatrous customs.

In like manner we may easily perceive a reason why the law should direct, "Neither shall a garment of linen and woollen come upon thee;" when we understand, that such mixed garments of linen and woollen were the proper habits of idolatrous priests; and which, according to the professed doctrines of their idolatrous worship, were supposed to have some powerful magical virtue in them.

For the same reason we can easily understand the wisdom of appointing by law, that "the woman shall not wear that which appertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment; for all that do so are abomination to the Lord thy God;" when it was an idolatrous constitution of their neighbours, as Maimon found it in a magic book, that men ought to stand before the star of Venus in the flowered garments of women; and women were to put on the armour of men before the star of Mars, as bishop Patrick on the place truly represents its meaning.

The same idolatrous custom is observed by Macrobius, that men worshipped Venus in women's habits, and women in the habits of men.

There is no reason then, we see, to imagine that these laws, which were to distinguish the Hebrew people from the idolatrous nations, were made only out of hatred to their neighbours, and to all their customs and manners, good or bad, innocent as well as idolatrous. It appears on the contrary to be plainly quite another reason; it was from a wise care of their preservation from such idolatrous customs, as there was very great reason to fear, would prove a dangerous temptation to lead them into idolatry, and which were hardly to be ased without it. All reflections, with how much confidence soever on the Hebrew laws, as if they were established upon no better motives than the hatred of their neighbours, will appear in this view groundless, and without all foundation, when the true reason shall appear so wise, so plain, and so natural.

These two views then, to preserve in the Hebrew nation the knowledge and worship of the one true God, and to preserve it from the spreading evils of idolatry,

by separating it from the society of idolaters, by forbidding all use of idolatrous rites and customs, may be looked upon as considerable intentions in the constitution; according to which, we are to examine and to judge of the equity and wisdom of the constitution itself. Neither of which can be so well judged of, without taking these intentions into consideration. If we regard the Hebrew constitution only as an institution of religion and religious worship, or only as a civil polity and a form of civil government, we shall widely mistake the true nature of it. It is evident beyond question, the Mosaic account of it represents it a theocracy, in which Jehovah is God, and Kings; and in which the true worship of the only true God was to be preserved against idolatry, and the nation, in obedience to the laws of this institution, should enjoy liberty, peace, prosperity and happiness in the protection of a wise and powerful government.

It may be proper to observe here, that these designs appear in themselves worthy the wisdom and the goodness of God; that he should take care in some proper way to put a stop to so prevailing a course of idolatry. If the design shall appear in itself manifestly wise and good, the proper means to effect it will appear to be equitable, wise and good also. Some seem not to perceive, at least are not willing to own this. The more fully then to make us sensible of it, let us briefly observe some of the many great evils of idolatry, which this Hebrew constitution was intended and formed to prevent.

One of the chief and most influencing principles of idolatry, was a false persuasion that the temporal blessings of life, health, length of days, fruitful seasons, victory in war, and such advantages, were to be expected and sought for as the gifts of some inferior and subordinate beings, as guardians of mortal men; or from secret influence of the stars and heavenly bodies, supposed inhabited, and animated by some powerful beings, or gods, whose protection and favour were to be obtained by the use of some magical ceremonies, gestures and words, or by some senseless or some barbarous rites of worship.

Thus men came not only to lose the true knowledge of the only true God, and of his immediate providence, and that all these blessings could therefore come from him alone, who was both pleased and

best worshipped by virtue, goodness, righteousness and true holiness; but they became necessarily vicious and corrupt in practice, as well as principle. They came to think they were not to expect the blessings of life from the favour of the one true God, a Being himself of infinite purity, righteousness, and goodness, by reverencing and by imitating him; but from the favour of a Jupiter, who with all his fine titles is represented in his history, to have been an intemperate, as lustful, and as wicked as any the worst of men; or from a Mercury, a patron of thieves and robbers; or from a Bacchus, the god of intemperance and drunkenness; or from a Venus, the patroness of all manner of uncleanness, and debauchery.

The known principles and the most sacred ceremonies and mysteries in the idolatrous worship of such deities, actually shewed what encouragement was given to all manner of vice. They extinguished all religious principles of moral virtue and goodness, and gave additional strength to men's natural inclinations, to intemperance, lust, fraud, violence, and every kind of unrighteousness and debauchery. The Phalli, and the Mylli, known religious rites in the worship of Bacchus, Osiris, and Ceres, were such obscene ceremonies, that modesty forbids to explain them. It may be sufficient to mention the known custom of virgins before marriage, sacrificing their chastity to the honour of Venus, as a lascivious goddess, as the historian expresses it, lest she alone should appear lascivious. A custom, according to the historian, which was especially used in Cyprus, which was in the neighbourhood of Canaan.

Idolatry had introduced another most cruel custom of human sacrifices. This prevailed among the Phenicians, the Tyrians, and the Carthaginians, a Tyrian colony; on which inhuman custom the forementioned historian makes this remark, that they used a bloody and wicked rite of religion, as a remedy. They offered men for sacrifices, and brought young children to the altars, at an age that usually moves the compassion of an enemy; and endeavoured to obtain the favour of the gods by the blood of those, for whose lives prayers were more generally used to be made to the gods.

This cruel custom, how inhuman soever, such were the evil effects of idolatry, soon

became almost universal; and spread itself among the Greeks, the Gauls, and the German nations.

Among the Canaanites it was a known custom to offer their children to Moloch, likely the same idol with Adrameleck and Anameleck. Some learned men have indeed been willing to believe, that passing through the fire to Moloch, might mean a sort of purification, rather than actual burning them in the fire; but besides the testimony of historians in general to the practice of other nations, the Scriptures plainly mean consuming them to death by fire. So it is described by the prophet Ezekiel; "And have caused their sons whom they bare unto me, to pass through the fire to devour them." Did they cause them to pass through the fire, only to purify them, and to preserve them alive? No, certainly; but to devour or consume them. The same prophet elsewhere determines this meaning. "Thou hast slain my children and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire." It is charged as an act of idolatry in Ahaz, that he caused his son to pass through the fire, according to the abomination of the Heathen. This is explained in another place, that "he burned his children in the fire after the abomination of the Heathen." And it is expressly said of Adrameleck, and Anameleck, the idols of Sepharvaim, that "they burned their children in the fire to them."

If we consider the many other abominable immoralities of the Canaanites, by which they defiled themselves, as they are enumerated in the prohibition of them to the Hebrew nation, we may easily perceive, that a nation which had defiled themselves in so many and so great abominations, did well deserve an exemplary punishment from the righteous judge of the earth; that it was wise, as well as just, to shew in their punishment, that their idols were not, as they imagined and falsely believed, the givers of long life, peace, and worldly prosperity; but that the one true God was alone the supreme disposer of all the blessings of providence; and that none of the idol gods, in whom they trusted, could save them out of his hand, or deliver them, when God should visit their iniquities.

May we not also perceive a kind design, in giving some remarkable instances of providence, for the punishment of so gross

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immoralities, the effects of idolatrous principles and practice, and for the encouragement of such acknowledgment and worship of the true God, as was the best preservative against these abominations, by some observable instances of particular protection and favour; to let such worshippers of the true God know, that by keeping themselves from those abominations, the natural and usual effects of idolatry, they were to hope for the continuance of such particular protection and favour in all after-times?

Hence it may appear, the severity with which the Hebrew history acquaints us, the Canaanites were punished, and the title whereby the Hebrews held their land, whom God cast out before them, were no ways inconsistent with the justice, or wisdom, or goodness of God, as some have insinuated. The question is really brought to this one point, Whether such abominable immoralities, as followed naturally and universally from their idolatrous principles, and forms of worship, were not highly criminal; so criminal as to deserve a punishment? that it became the justice and wisdom of the Governor of the world to put some stop to them, to prevent them in some measure, by forming and establishing a constitution in which the knowledge and worship of the one true God should be preserved in opposition to idolatry, a perpetual source of innumerable vices and immoralities. Idolatry, you see then, appears in the natural fruits of it, not only an error of the understanding, not at all a matter of harmless speculation, but a fountain of very dangerous immoralities, which led men naturally, and even with the encouragements of religion, into intemperance, uncleanness, murders, and many vices, inconsistent with the prosperity and peace of society, as well as with the happiness of private persons. When God shall punish such iniquities, he punishes men for their wickedness, not for their errors. He punishes men for such wickedness, as deserves to be punished, whatever pretended principles or real dictates of conscience it may proceed from. No man sure, can reasonably account it injustice in a government to punish sodomy, bestiality, or the frequent murder of innocent children, what pretences soever men should make to conscience or religion, in vindication of them. The most unnatural sins were countenanced by the mysteries

of idolatrous worship; the use of that obscene ceremony the Phalli, owed its original to the memory of the sin against nature, and to the history of a god hallowing it by his own act. Can any man reasonably call such a restraint of vice persecution, when not to endeavour by all means to restrain it, would argue a great neglect, weakness, and folly, in any administration of government whatsoever?

If then the punishment for so heinous crimes and immoralities will be just and wise in itself, which way can any man find out, to make it unjust or unwise in the supreme Governor of the world? How can it be unjust in him, to appoint such persons as he shall think most fit, to execute such righteous judgment by his commission? The common rights of nations, and any personal claim of the Hebrews, are altogether out of this question; the history plainly shews, they made no personal or national claim at all to the land of Canaan; but that God cast out the people before them, for all their abominations; that it was not their own power, but the hand of God, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and into the promised land. So that the whole is considered as the immediate act of God himself, for the proof of which the history gives a long series of miracles, in Egypt, at the Red-Sea, for many years in the wilderness, at the taking of Jericho, and settling the Hebrew nation in the possession of the promised land.

And here let us justly observe, that this very way of punishing the Canaanites for their many great abominations by the Hebrew nation, to whom God gave the possession of their land, has some peculiar marks of wisdom, which may shew it to be preferred to many other ways; such as pestilential distempers, fire from heaven, or a flood, ways in which God hath punished the wickedness of the world in former times. For this was a very fit means for the cure, as well as the punishment of idolatry, to destroy the root of these great evils, as well as to execute righteous judgment on those who had committed them. This was a design every way worthy the wisdom and goodness of God. Sure then, no ways inconsistent with his justice. The protection of the Hebrew nation, and the favour of God to them as a peculiar people, was a visible and standing confutation of idolatry; it shewed,

that Jehovah, the one true God, the King of Israel, had himself an immediate hand in the administration of particular providences; that he had not given it out of his own hands into the hands of any inferior beings, whatsoever, which error was the great foundation of idolatry. It further shewed the power of Jehovah the true God, manifested in the protection of his people, superior to the power of all the idols of the Heathen; and that none of the false gods they worshipped could be compared to Jehovah.

This is a question then not to be argued from the common rights of men, and nations; for no such rights, either of invasion or conquest, are so much as pretended to in the most distant manner. We see the only point in question, is, what are the rights of God's supreme authority? What is consistent with the wisdom of his government, how far he may punish the greatest immoralities with temporal evils? Ask the Sacred History, it will tell you, the Hebrews set up no title to the land of Canaan, either civil or religious in their own right; it only makes the rights of the Sovereign of the world as extensive as the rights of the chief magistrates in every government are allowed by the laws of nature and nations to be over their own subjects. The Scriptures on this question only assert, that God gave a commission to execute his sentence, which was either a forfeiture of lands, or life, for a long commission of crimes, that deservedly incurred the forfeiture of both.

Whether the Hebrew nation had really such a commission from God, or no; whether they were truly directed by divine oracle; whether such wonders were really wrought before their eyes, and such unquestionable instances of divine favour and protection in a long series for many years, as the Hebrew history relates: these are all questions of fact. But in all such questions general and abstract reasonings can have no place, where the facts themselves are naturally and morally possible; as every one may perceive they are in this case. If the supreme Governor of the world has a right to give such commission, if it is not unjust to use the hands of men, instead of a plague or fire from heaven, to punish the wickedness of men, the only question that can remain in such a case is this, whether in fact the Hebrew nation did really receive such a commission from Je-

hovah, or no: Thus far then the whole will rest upon the evidence of the Mosaic revelation; and there I shall leave it, it not being the design of this dissertation to enter into an argument, in which many, as I apprehend, have already given so full satisfaction. *Rev. Moses Lowman.*

§ 175. *The fulfilment of the Mosaic prophecies concerning the Jews an unanswerable argument for the truth of the Bible.*

IT is observable that the prophecies of Moses abound most in the latter part of his writings. As he drew nearer his end, it pleased God to open to him larger prospects of things. As he was about to take leave of the people, he was enabled to disclose unto them more particulars of their future state and condition. The design of this work will permit us to take notice of such only as have some reference to these later ages; and we will confine ourselves principally to the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy, the greater part whereof we may see accomplished in the world at this present time.

This great prophet and lawgiver is here proposing at large to the people the blessings for obedience, and the curses for disobedience; and indeed he had foretold at several times and upon several occasions, that they should be happy or miserable in the world, as they were obedient or disobedient to the law that he had given them. And could there be any stronger evidence of the divine original of the Mosaic law? and hath not the interposition of providence been wonderfully remarkable in their good or bad fortune? and is not the truth of the prediction fully attested by the whole series of their history from their first settlement in Canaan to this very day? But he is larger and more particular in recounting the curses than the blessings, as if he had a prescience of the people's disobedience, and foresaw that a larger portion and longer continuation of the evil would fall to their share, than of the good. I know that some critics make a division of these prophecies, and imagine that one part relates to the former captivity of the Jews, and to the calamities which they suffered under the Chaldeans; and that the other part relates to the latter captivity of the Jews, and to the calamities which they suffered under the Romans: but there is no need

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of any such distinction: there is no reason to think that any such was intended by the author; several prophecies of the one part as well as of the other have been fulfilled at both periods, but they have all more amply been fulfilled during the latter period; and there cannot be a more lively picture than they exhibit, of the state of the Jews at present.

1. We will consider them with a view to the order of time, rather than the order wherein they lie; and we may not improperly begin with this passage, ver. 49, "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth, a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;" and the Chaldeans might be said to come from far, in comparison with the Moabites, Philistines, and other neighbours, who used to infect Judea. Much the same description is given of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah, (v. 15.) "Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the Lord: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say." He compares them in like manner to eagles. (Sam. iv. 19.) "Our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of the heaven: they pursued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness." But this description cannot be applied to any nation with such propriety as to the Romans. They were truly brought from far, from the end of the earth. Vespasian and Adrian, the two great conquerors and destroyers of the Jews, both came from commanding here in Britain. The Romans too for the rapidity of their conquests might very well be compared to eagles, and perhaps not without an allusion to the standard of the Roman armies, which was an eagle: and their language was more unknown to the Jews than the Chaldee.

2. The enemies of the Jews are farther characterised in the next verse. "A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young." Such were the Chaldeans; and the sacred historian saith expressly, (2 Chron. xxxvi. 17.) "that for the wickedness of the Jews God brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword, in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave

them all into his hand." Such also were the Romans: for when Vespasian entered Gadara, Josephus saith, that he slew all man by man, the Romans showing mercy to no age, out of hatred to the nation, and remembrance of their former injuries. The like slaughter was made at Gamala, for nobody escaped besides two women, and they escaped by concealing themselves from the rage of the Romans. For they did not so much as spare young children, but every one at that time snatching up many cast them down from the citadel.

Their enemies were also to besiege and take their cities, ver. 52. "And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst throughout all thy land. So Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it, and at the end of three years they took it." (2 Kings xviii. 9, 10.) "So did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them:" (Ib. ver. 19.) and Nebuchadnezzar and his captains took and spoiled Jerusalem, burnt the city and temple, "and brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about." (Ib. xxv. 10.) So likewise the Romans, as we may read in Josephus's history of the Jewish war, demolished several fortified places, before they besieged and destroyed Jerusalem. And the Jews may very well be said to have trusted in their high and fenced walls, for they seldom ventured a battle in the open field. They confided in the strength and situation of Jerusalem, as the Jebusites, the former inhabitants of the place, had done before them: (2 Sam. v. 6, 7.) inasmuch that they are represented saying (Jer. xxi. 13.) "Who shall come down against us? or who shall enter into our habitation?" Jerusalem was indeed a very strong place, and wonderfully fortified both by nature and art, according to the description of Tacitus as well as of Josephus: and yet how many times was it taken? It was taken by Shishak king of Egypt, by Nebuchadnezzar, by Antiochus Epiphanes, by Pompey, by Sosius and Herod, before its final destruction by Titus.

4. In these sieges they were to suffer much, and especially from famine, "in the straits wherewith their enemies should distress them," ver. 53, &c. And accordingly when the king of Syria besieged Samaria, "there was a great famine in Samaria; and behold they besieged

it, until an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver." (2 Kings vi. 25.) And when Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, "the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land." (2 Kings xxv. 3.) And in the last siege of Jerusalem by the Romans there was a most terrible famine in the city, and Josephus hath given so melancholy an account of it, that we cannot read it without shuddering. He saith particularly, that women snatched the food out of the very mouths of their husbands, and sons of their fathers, and (what is most miserable) mothers of their infants: and in another place he saith, that in every house, if there appeared any semblance of food, a battle ensued, and the dearest friends and relations fought with one another, snatching away the miserable provisions of life: so literally were the words of Moses fulfilled, ver. 54. &c. "the man's eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and towards his children, because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates," and in like manner the woman's "eye shall be evil towards the husband of her bosom, and towards her son, and towards her daughter."

5. Nay it was expressly foretold, that not only the men, but even the women should eat their own children. Moses had foretold the same thing before, Levit. xxvi. 29. "Ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat." He repeats it here, ver. 53, "And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters;" and more particularly ver. 56, &c. "The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground, for delicateness and tenderness—she shall eat her children for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in thy gates." And it was fulfilled about 600 years after the time of Moses among the Israelites, when Samaria was besieged by the king of Syria, and two women agreed together, the one to give up her son to be boiled and eaten to-day, and the other to deliver up her son to be dressed and eaten to-morrow, and one of them was eaten accordingly. (2 Kings vi. 28, 29.)

It was fulfilled again about 900 years after the time of Moses, among the Jews in the siege of Jerusalem before the Babylonish captivity; and Baruch thus expresseth it, (ii. 1, &c.) "The Lord hath made good his word, which he pronounced against us, to bring upon us great plagues, such as never happened under the whole heaven, as it came to pass in Jerusalem, according to the things that were written in the law of Moses, that a man should eat the flesh of his own son, and the flesh of his own daughter:" and Jeremiah thus laments it in his Lamentations, (vi. 10.) "The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children, they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people." And again it was fulfilled above 1500 years after the time of Moses in the last siege of Jerusalem by Titus, and we read in Josephus particularly of a noble woman's killing and eating her own sucking child. Moses saith, "The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground, for delicateness and tenderness:" and there cannot be a more natural and lively description of a woman, who was according to Josephus illustrious for her family and riches. Moses saith, "she shall eat them for want of all things:" and according to Josephus she had been plundered of all her substance and provisions by the tyrants and soldiers. Moses saith, that she should do it "secretly;" and according to Josephus, when she had boiled and eaten half, she covered up the rest, and kept it for another time. At so many different times and distant periods hath this prophecy been fulfilled; and one would have thought that such distress and horror had almost transcended imagination, and much less that any person could certainly have foreseen and foretold it.

6. Great numbers of them were to be destroyed, ver. 62. "And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were, as the stars of heaven for multitude." Now not to mention any other of the calamities and slaughters which they have undergone, there was in the last siege of Jerusalem by Titus an infinite multitude, saith Josephus, who perished by famine: and he computes, that during the whole siege, the number of those who were destroyed by that and by the war amounted to eleven hundred thousand, the people being assembled from all parts to celebrate the passover; and the

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same author hath given us an account of 1,240,490 destroyed in Jerusalem and other parts of Judea, besides 99,200 made prisoners; as Basnage has reckoned them up from that historian's account. Indeed there is not a nation upon earth, that hath been exposed to so many massacres and persecutions. Their history abounds with them. If God had not given them a promise of a numerous posterity, the whole race would many a time have been extirpated.

7. They were to be carried into Egypt, and sold for slaves at a very low price, ver. 68. "And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again, with ships: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you." They had come out of Egypt triumphant, but now they should return thither as slaves. They had walked through the sea as dry land at their coming out, but now they should be carried thither in ships. They might be carried thither in the ships of the Tyrian or Sidonian merchants, or by the Romans who had a fleet in the Mediterranean; and this was a much safer way of conveying so many prisoners, than sending them by land. It appears from Josephus, that in the reigns of the two first Ptolemies many of the Jews were slaves in Egypt. And when Jerusalem was taken by Titus, of the captives who were above 17 years he sent many bound to the works in Egypt; those under 17 were sold; but so little care was taken of these captives, that eleven thousand of them perished for want. And we learn from St. Jerome, that after their last overthrow by Adrian, many thousands of them were sold, and those who could not be sold, were transported into Egypt, and perished by shipwreck or famine, or were massacred by the inhabitants.

8. They were to be rooted out of their own land, ver. 63. "And ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it." They were indeed plucked from off their own land, when the ten tribes were carried into captivity by the king of Assyria, and other nations were planted in their stead; and when the two other tribes were carried away captive to Babylon; and when the Romans took away their place and nation; besides other captivities and transpositions of the people. Afterwards, when the Emperor Adrian had subdued the rebellious Jews, he published an edict forbidding them upon

pain of death to set foot in Jerusalem, or even to approach the country round about it. Tertullian and Jerome say, that they were prohibited from entering into Judea. From that time to this their country hath been in the possession of foreign lords and masters, few of the Jews dwelling in it, and those only of a low servile condition. Benjamin of Tudela in Spain, a celebrated Jew of the twelfth century, travelled into all parts to visit those of his own nation, and to learn an exact state of their affairs: and he hath reported, that Jerusalem was almost entirely abandoned by the Jews. He found there not above two hundred persons, who were for the most part dyers of wool, and who every year purchased the privilege of the monopoly of that trade. They lived altogether under David's tower, and made there a very little figure. If Jerusalem had so few Jews in it, the rest of the holy land was still more depopulated. He found two of them in one city, twenty in another, most whereof were dyers. In other places there were more persons; but in upper Galilee, where the nation was in greatest repute after the ruin of Jerusalem, he found hardly any Jews at all. A very accurate and faithful traveller of our own nation, who was himself also in the holy land, saith that it is for the most part now inhabited by Moors and Arabians; those possessing the valleys, and these the mountains. Turks there be few: but many Greeks with other Christians of all sects and nations, such as impute to the place an adherent holiness. Here are also some Jews, yet inherit they no part of the land, but in their own country do live as aliens.

9. But they were not only to be plucked off from their own land, but also to be dispersed into all nations, ver. 25. "And thou shalt be removed in all the kingdoms of the earth;" and again, ver. 64. "And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from one end of the earth even unto the other." Nehemiah, (i. 8, 9) confesseth that these words were fulfilled in the Babylonish captivity; but they have more amply been fulfilled since the great dispersion of the Jews by the Romans. What people indeed have been scattered so far and wide as they? and where is the nation, which is a stranger to them, or to which they are strangers? They swarm in many parts of the East, are spread through most of the countries of Europe and

and Afric, and there are several families of them in the West Indies. They circulate through all parts, where trade and money circulate; and are, as I may say, the brokers of the whole world.

10. But though they should be so dispersed, yet they should not be totally destroyed, but still subsist as a distinct people, as Moses had before foretold. Levit. xxvi. 44. "And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them." The Jewish nation, like the bush of Moses, hath been always burning, but is never consumed. And what a marvellous thing is it, that after so many wars, battles, and sieges, after so many fires, famines, and pestilences, after so many rebellions, massacres, and persecutions, after so many years of captivity, slavery, and misery, they are not destroyed utterly, and though scattered among all people, yet subsist as a distinct people by themselves? Where is any thing comparable to this to be found in all the histories, and in all the nations under the sun?

11. However, they should suffer much in their dispersion, and should not rest long in any place, ver. 65. "And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest." They have been so far from finding rest, that they have been banished from city to city, from country to country. In many places they have been banished, and recalled, and banished again. We will only just mention their great banishments in modern times, and from countries very well known. In the latter end of the thirteenth century they were banished from England by Edward I. and were not permitted to return and settle again till Cromwell's time. In the latter end of the fourteenth century they were banished from France (for the seventh time, says Mezeray) by Charles VI.; and ever since they have been only tolerated, they have not enjoyed entire liberty, except at Metz, where they have a synagogue. In the latter end of the fifteenth century, they were banished from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella; and according to Mariana, there were an hundred and seventy thousand families, or as some say, eight hundred thousand persons who left the kingdom: most of them paid dearly to John II. for a refuge in Portugal, but within a few years were expelled from thence also by his successor

Emanuel. And in our own time, within these few years, they were banished from Prague by the queen of Bohemia.

12. They should be "oppressed and spoiled evermore;" and their "houses" and "vineyards," their "oxen" and "asses" should be taken from them, and they should "be only oppressed and crushed away," ver. 29, &c. And what frequent seizures have been made of their effects in almost all countries? how often have they been fined and fleeced by almost all governments? how often have they been forced to redeem their lives with what is almost as dear as their lives, their treasure? Instances are innumerable. We will only cite an historian of our own, who says that Henry III. always polled the Jews at every low ebb of his fortunes. One Abraham, who was found delinquent, was forced to pay seven hundred marks for his redemption. Aaron, another Jew, protested, that the king had taken from him at times thirty thousand marks of silver, besides two hundred marks of gold, which he had presented to the queen. And in like manner he used many others of the Jews. And when they were banished in the reign of Edward I. their estates were confiscated, and immense sums thereby accrued to the crown.

13. "Their sons and their daughters should be given unto another people," ver. 32. And in several countries, in Spain and Portugal particularly, their children have been taken from them by order of the government, to be educated in the popish religion. The fourth council of Toledo ordered that all their children should be taken from them, for fear they should partake of their errors, and that they should be shut up in monasteries, to be instructed in the Christian truths. And when they were banished from Portugal, the king, says Mariana, ordered all their children, under 14 years of age, to be taken from them, and baptized: a practice not at all justifiable, adds the historian, because none ought to be forced to become Christians, nor children to be taken from their parents.

14. "They should be mad for the sight of their eyes which they should see," ver. 34. And into what madness, fury, and desperation have they been pushed by the cruel usage, extortions, and oppressions which they have undergone? We will alledge only two similar instances, one from ancient, and one from modern history. After the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, some of the

the worst of the Jews took refuge in the castle of Masada, where being closely besieged by the Romans, they at the persuasion of Eleazar, their leader, first murdered their wives and children; then ten men were chosen by lot to slay the rest; this being done, one of the ten was chosen in like manner to kill the other nine; which having executed, he set fire to the place, and then stabbed himself. There were nine hundred and sixty who perished in this miserable manner; and only two women and five boys escaped by hiding themselves in the aqueducts under ground. Such another instance we have in our English history. For in the reign of Richard the First, when the people were in arms to make a general massacre of them, fifteen hundred of them seized on the city of York to defend themselves; but being besieged they offered to capitulate, and to ransom their lives with money. The offer being refused, one of them cried in despair, that it was better to die courageously for the law, than to fall into the hands of the Christians. Every one immediately took his knife, and stabbed his wife and children. The men afterwards retired into the king's palace, which they set on fire, in which they consumed themselves with the palace and furniture.

15. "They should serve other gods, wood and stone," ver. 36; and again, ver. 64, "they should serve other gods, which neither they nor their fathers had known, even wood and stone." And is it not too common for the Jews in popish countries to comply with the idolatrous worship of the church of Rome, and to bow down to stocks and stones, rather than their effects should be seized and confiscated? Here again we must cite the author, who hath most studied, and hath best written their modern history, and whom we have had occasion to quote several times in this discourse. The Spanish and Portugal Inquisitions, saith he, reduce them to the dilemma of being either hypocrites or burnt. The numbers of these dissemblers is very considerable; and it ought not to be concluded, that there are no Jews in Spain or Portugal, because they are not known: they are so much the more dangerous, for not only being very numerous, but confounded with the ecclesiastics, and entering into all ecclesiastical dignities. In another place he saith, The most surprising thing is, that this religion spreads from generation to generation, and still

subsists in the persons of dissemblers in a remote posterity. In vain the great lords of Spain make alliances, change their names, and take ancient scutcheons; they are still known to be of Jewish race, and Jews themselves. The convents of monks and nuns are full of them. Most of the canons, inquisitors, and bishops, proceed from this nation. This is enough to make the people and clergy of this country tremble, since such sort of churchmen can only profane the sacraments, and want intention in consecrating the host they adore. In the mean time Orobio, who relates the fact, knew these dissemblers. He was one of them himself, and bent the knee before the sacrament. Moreover he brings proofs of his assertion, in maintaining, that there are in the synagogue of Amsterdam, brothers and sisters and near relations to good families of Spain and Portugal; and even Franciscan monks, Dominicans, and Jesuits, who come to do penance, and make amends for the crime they have committed in dissembling.

16. "They should become an astonishment, a proverb, and a bye-word among all nations," ver. 37. And do we not hear and see this prophecy fulfilled almost every day? is not the avarice, usury, and hard-heartedness of a Jew grown proverbial, and are not their persons generally odious among all sorts of people? Mohammedans, Heathens, and Christians, however they may disagree in other points, yet generally agree in vilifying, abusing, and persecuting the Jews. In most places where they are tolerated, they are obliged to live in a separate quarter by themselves, (as they did here in the Old Jewry) and to wear some badge of distinction. Their very countenances commonly distinguish them from the rest of mankind. They are in all respects treated, as if they were of another species. And when a great master of nature would draw the portrait of a Jew, how detestable a character hath he represented in the person of his Jew of Venice!

17. Finally, "Their plagues should be wonderful, even great plagues, and of long continuance," ver. 59. And have not their plagues continued now these 1700 years? Their former captivities were very short in comparison; and Ezekiel and Daniel prophesied in the hand of the Chaldeans: but now they have no true prophet to foretell an end of their calamities, they have only false Messiahs to delude them
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and aggravate their misfortunes. In their former captivities they had the comfort of being conveyed to the same place; they dwelt together in the land of Goshen, they were carried together to Babylon: but now they are dispersed all over the face of the earth. What nation hath suffered so much, and yet endured so long? what nation hath subsisted as a distinct people in their own country, so long as these have done in their dispersion into all countries? and what a standing miracle is this exhibited to the view and observation of the whole world?

Here are instances of prophecies, of prophecies delivered above three thousand years ago, and yet as we see fulfilling in the world at this very time: and what stronger proofs can we desire of the divine legation of Moses? How these instances may affect others, I know not; but for myself I must acknowledge, they not only convince, but amaze and astonish me beyond expression. They are truly, as Moses foretold they would be, "a sign and a wonder for ever," ver. 45, 46. "Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed, because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments, and his statutes which he commanded thee: and they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever."

Bishop Newton.

§ 176. *The Excellency of Scripture.*

The incomparable excellency which is in the sacred Scriptures, will fully appear, if we consider the matters contained in them under this threefold capacity. 1. As matters of divine revelation. 2. As a rule of life. 3. As containing that covenant of grace which relates to man's eternal happiness.

1. Consider the Scripture generally, as containing in it matters of divine revelation, and therein the excellency of the Scripture appears in two things. 1. The matters which are revealed. 2. The manner in which they are revealed.

1. The matters which are revealed in Scripture, may be considered these three ways. 1. As they are matters of the greatest weight and moment. 2. As matters of the greatest depth and mysteriousness. 3. As matters of the most universal satisfaction to the minds of men.

1. They are matters of the greatest moment and importance for men to know.

The wisdom of men is most known by the weight of the things they speak; and therefore that wherein the wisdom of God is discovered, cannot contain any thing that is mean and trivial; they must be matters of the highest importance, which the Supreme Ruler of the world vouchsafes to speak to men concerning: and such we shall find the matters which God hath revealed in his word to be, which either concern the rectifying our apprehensions of his nature, or making known to men their state and condition, or discovering the way whereby to avoid eternal misery. Now which is there of these three, which, supposing God to discover his mind to the world, it doth not highly become him to speak to men of?

1. What is there which doth more highly concern men to know, than God himself? or what more glorious and excellent object could he discover than himself to the world? There is nothing certainly which should more commend the Scriptures to us, than that thereby we may grow more acquainted with God; that we may know more of his nature, and all his perfections, and many of the great reasons of his actions in the world. We may by them understand with safety what the eternal purposes of God were as to the way of man's recovery by the death of his Son; we may there see and understand the great wisdom of God; not only in the contrivance of the world, and ordering of it, but in the gradual revelations of himself to his people, by what steps he trained up his church till the fulness of time was come; what his aim was in laying such a load of ceremonies on his people of the Jews; by what steps and degrees he made way for the full revelation of his will to the world by speaking in these last days by his Son, after he had spoke at sundry times and divers manners by the prophets, &c. unto the fathers. In the Scriptures we read the most rich and admirable discoveries of divine goodness, and all the ways and methods he useth in alluring sinners to himself; with what majesty he commands, with what condescension he intreats, with what importunity he woos men's souls to be reconciled to him; with what favour he embraceth, with what tenderness he chastiseth, with what bowels he pitieth those who have chosen him to be their God! With what power he supporteth, with what wisdom he directeth, with what cordials he refresheth the souls

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of such who are dejected under the sense of his displeasure, and yet their love is sincere towards him! With what profound humility, what holy boldness, what becoming distance, and yet what restless importunity do we therein find the souls of God's people addressing themselves to him in prayer! With what cheerfulness do they serve him, with what confidence do they trust him, with what resolution do they adhere to him in all straits and difficulties, with what patience do they submit to his will in their greatest extremities! How fearful are they of sinning against God, how careful to please him, how regardless of suffering, when they must choose either that or sinning, how little apprehensive of men's displeasure, while they enjoy the favour of God! Now all these things which are so fully and pathetically expressed in Scripture, do abundantly set forth to us the exuberancy and plenitude of God's grace and goodness towards his people, which makes them delight so much in him, and be so sensible of his displeasure. But above all other discoveries of God's goodness, his sending his Son into the world to die for sinners, is that which the Scripture sets forth with the greatest life and eloquence. By eloquence, I mean not an artificial composition of words, but the gravity, weight, and persuasiveness of the matter contained in them. And what can tend more to melt our frozen hearts into a current of thankful obedience to God, than the vigorous reflection of the beams of God's love through Jesus Christ upon us? Was there ever so great an expression of love heard of! nay, was it possible to be imagined, that that God who perfectly hates sin, should himself offer the pardon of it, and send his Son into the world to secure it to the sinner, who doth so heartily repent of his sins, as to deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Christ! Well might the Apostle say, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." How dry and sapless are all the voluminous discourses of philosophers, compared with this sentence! How jejune and unsatisfactory are all the discoveries they had of God and his goodness, in comparison of what we have by the Gospel of Christ! Well might Paul then say, "That he determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified." Christ crucified is the library which triumphant souls will be studying in to all eternity. This is the only library which to commend

is the true *larynx Jovis*, that which cures the soul of all its maladies and distempers; other knowledge makes men's minds giddy and fatalent, this settles and composes them; other knowledge is apt to swell men into high conceits and opinions of themselves, this brings them to the truest view of themselves, and thereby to humility and sobriety; other knowledge leaves men's hearts as it found them, this alters them and makes them better. So transcendent an excellency is there in the knowledge of Christ crucified above the sublimest speculations in the world.

And is not this an ineffimable benefit we enjoy by the Scripture, that therein we can read and converse with all these expressions of God's love and goodness, and that in his own language? Shall we admire and praise what we meet with in Heathen philosophers, which is generous and handsome; and shall we not adore the infinite fulness of the Scriptures, which run over with continued expressions of that and a higher nature? What folly is it to magnify those lean kind, the notions of philosophers, and to condemn the fat, the plenty and fulness of the Scriptures? If there be not far more valuable and excellent discoveries of the divine nature and perfections, if there be not far more excellent directions and rules of practice in the Sacred Scriptures, than in the sublimest of all the philosophers, then let us leave our full ears, and feed upon the thin. But certainly no sober and rational spirit, that puts any value upon the knowledge of God, but on the same account that he doth prize the discourses of any philosophers concerning God, he cannot but set a value of a far higher nature on the Word of God. And as the goodness of God is thus discovered in Scripture, so is his justice and holiness: we have therein recorded the most remarkable judgments of God upon contumacious sinners, the severest denunciations of a judgment to come against all that live in sin, the exactest precepts of holiness in the world; and what can be desired more to discover the holiness of God, than we find in Scripture concerning him? If therefore acquaintance with the nature, perfection, designs of so excellent a being as God is, be a thing desirable to human nature, we have the greatest cause to admire the excellency and adore the fulness of the Scriptures, which gives so large, rational, and compleat account of the being and attributes of God. And which tends yet more

to commend the Scriptures to us, those things which the Scripture doth most fully discover concerning God, do not at all contradict those prime and common notions which are in our natures concerning him, but do exceedingly advance and improve them, and tend the most to regulate our conceptions and apprehensions of God, that we may not miscarry therein, as otherwise men are apt to do. For it being natural to men so far to love themselves, as to set the greatest value upon those excellencies which they think themselves most masters of: thence men come to be exceedingly mistaken in their apprehensions of a deity, some attributing one thing as a perfection, another a different thing, according to their humours and inclinations. Thus imperious self-willed men are apt to cry up God's absolute power and dominion as his greatest perfection; easy and soft-spirited men his patience and goodness; severe and rigid men his justice and severity: every one according to his humour and temper, making his god of his own complexion: and not only so, but in things remote enough from being perfections at all, yet because they are such things as they prize and value, they suppose of necessity they must be in God, as is evident in the Epicureans *atragalia*, by which they exclude providence, as hath already been observed. And withal considering how very difficult it is for one who really believes that God is of a pure, just, and holy nature, and that he hath grievously offended him by his sins, to believe that this God will pardon him upon true repentance: it is thence necessary that God should make known himself to the world, to prevent our misconceptions of his nature, and to assure a suspicious, because guilty creature, how ready he is to pardon iniquity, transgression and sin, to such as unfeignedly repent of their follies, and return unto himself. Though the light of nature may dictate much to us of the benignity and goodness of the divine nature, yet it is hard to conceive that that should discover further than God's general goodness to such as please him: but no foundation can be gathered thence of his readiness to pardon offenders, which being an act of grace, must alone be discovered by his will. I cannot think the sun, moon, and stars are such itinerant preachers, as to unfold unto us the whole counsel and will of God in reference to man's acceptance with God upon repentance. It is not every star

in the firmament can do that which the star once did to the wise men, lead them unto Christ. The sun in the heavens is no *Parelius* to the sun of righteousness. The best astronomer will never find the day-star from on high in the rest of his number. What St. Austin said of Tully's works, is true of the whole volume of the creation. There are admirable things to be found in them: but the name of Christ is not legible there. The work of redemption is not engraven on the works of providence; if it had, a particular divine revelation had been unnecessary, and the apostles were sent on a needless errand, which the world had understood without their preaching; viz. "That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing to men their trespasses, and hath committed to them the ministry of reconciliation." How was the word of reconciliation committed to them, if it were common to them with the whole frame of the world? and the apostle's quare elsewhere might have been easily answered, How can men hear without a preacher? for then they might have known the way of salvation, without any special messengers sent to deliver it to them. I grant that God's long-suffering and patience is intended to lead men to repentance, and that some general collections might be made from providence of the placability of God's nature, and that God never left himself without a witness of his goodness in the world, being kind to the unthankful, and doing good, in giving rain and fruitful seasons. But though these things might sufficiently discover to such who were apprehensive of the guilt of sin, that God did not act according to his greatest severity, and thereby did give men encouragement to hearken out and enquire after the true way of being reconciled to God; yet all this amounts not to a firm foundation for faith as to the remission of sin, which doth suppose God himself publishing an act of grace and indemnity to the world; wherein he assures the pardon of sin to such as truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel. Now is not this an inestimable advantage we enjoy by the Scriptures, that therein we understand what God himself hath discovered of his own nature and perfections, and of his readiness to pardon sin upon those gracious terms of faith and repentance, and that which necessarily follows from these two, hearty and sincere obedience?

2. The Scriptures give the most faithful representation of the state and condition of the soul of man. The world was almost lost in disputes concerning the nature, condition, and immortality of the soul before divine revelation was made known to mankind by the gospel of Christ; but "life and immortality was brought to light by the gospel," and the future state of the soul of man, not discovered in an uncertain Platonical way, but with the greatest light and evidence from that God who hath the supreme disposal of souls, and therefore best knows and understands them. The Scriptures plainly and fully reveal a judgment to come, in which God will judge the secrets of all hearts; when every one must give an account of himself unto God, and God will call men to give an account of their stewardship here, of all the receipts they have had from him, and the expences they have been at, and the improvements they have made of the talents he put into their hands. So that the gospel of Christ is the fullest instrument of the discovery of the certainty of the future state of the soul, and the conditions which abide it, upon its being dislodged from the body. But this is not all which the Scripture discovers as to the state of the soul; for it is not only a prospective glass, reaching to its future state, but it is the most faithful looking-glass, to discover all the spots and deformities of the soul; and not only shews where they are, but whence they came, what their nature is, and whither they tend. The true original of all that disorder and discomposure which is in the soul of man, is only fully and satisfactorily given us in the Word of God. The nature and working of this corruption in man, had never been so clearly manifested, had not the law and will of God been discovered to the world; that is the glass whereby we see the secret workings of those bees in our hearts, the corruptions of our natures; that sets forth the folly of our imaginations, the unruliness of our passions, the distempers of our wills, and the abundant deceitfulness of our hearts. And it is hard for the most Elephantine sinner (one of the greatest magnitude) so to trouble these waters, as not therein to discover the greatness of his own deformities. But that which tends most to awaken the drowsy, senseless spirits of men, the Scripture doth most fully describe the tendency of corruption, "that the wages of sin is death," and the issue of continuance in sin

will be the everlasting misery of the soul, in a perpetual separation from the presence of God, and undergoing the lashes and severities of conscience to all eternity. What a great discovery is this of the faithfulness of God to the world, that he suffers not men to undo themselves without letting them know of it before hand, that they might avoid it! God seeks not to entrap mens souls, nor doth he rejoice in the misery and ruin of his creatures, but fully declares to them what the consequence and issue of their sinful practices will be, assures them of a judgment to come; declares his own future severity against contumacious sinners, that they might not think themselves surprised; and that if they had known there had been so great danger in sin, they would never have been such fools as for the sake of it to run into eternal misery. Now God to prevent this, with the greatest plainness and faithfulness, hath shewed men the nature and danger of all their sins, and assists them before hand what they will do in the end thereof; whether they are able to bear his wrath, and wrestle with everlasting burnings? if not, he bids them bethink themselves of what they have done already, and repent and amend their lives, lest iniquity prove their ruin, and destruction overtake them; and that without remedy. Now if men have cause to prize and value a faithful monitor, one that tenders their good, and would prevent their ruin, we have cause exceedingly to prize and value the Scriptures, which give us the truest representation of the state and condition of our souls.

3. The Scripture discovers to us the only way of pleasing God and enjoying his favour. That clearly reveals the way (which man might have sought for to all eternity without particular revelation) whereby sins may be pardoned, and whatever we do may be acceptable unto God. It shews us that the ground of our acceptance with God, is through Christ, whom he hath made, "a propitiation for the sins of the world," and who alone is the true and living way, whereby we may "draw near to God with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience." Through Christ we understand the terms on which God will shew favour and grace to the world, and by him we have ground of a ~~warrior's~~ access with freedom and boldness unto God. On his account we may hope not only for grace to subdue our sins, resist temptations, conquer the devil and the world;

world; but having "fought this good fight, and finished our course, by patient continuance in well doing, we may justly look for glory, honour, and immortality," and that "crown of righteousness which is laid up for those who wait in faith," holiness, and humility for the appearance of Christ from heaven. Now what things can there be of greater moment and importance for men to know, or God to reveal, than the nature of God and ourselves, the state and condition of our souls, the only way to avoid eternal misery and enjoy everlasting bliss!

The Scriptures discover not only matters of importance, but of the greatest depth and mysteriousness. There are many wonderful things in the law of God, things we may admire, but are never able to comprehend. Such are the eternal purposes and decrees of God, the doctrine of the Trinity, the incarnation of the Son of God, and the manner of the operation of the Spirit of God upon the souls of men, which are all things of great weight and moment for us to understand and believe that they are, and yet may be unsearchable to our reason, as to the particular manner of them.

The Scripture comprehends matters of the most universal satisfaction to the minds of men; though many things do much exceed our apprehensions, yet others are most suitable to the dictates of our nature. As Origen bid Celsus see, *ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ἀποκαλύψει τῆς ἀποκαλύψεως, ὡς ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ἀποκαλύψει*, whether it was not the agreeableness of the principles of faith with the common notions of human nature, which prevailed most upon all candid and ingenious auditors of them. And therefore, as Socrates said of Heraclitus's books, What he understood was excellent, and therefore he supposed that which he did not understand was so too: so ought we to say of the Scriptures: if those things which are within our capacity be so suitable to our natures and reasons, those cannot contradict our reason which yet are above them. There are many things which the minds of men were sufficiently assured that they were, yet were to seek for satisfaction concerning them; which they could never have had without divine revelation. As the nature of true happiness, wherein it lay, and how to be obtained; which the philosophers were so puzzled with, the Scriptures give us full satisfaction concerning

it. True contentment under the troubles of life, which the Scripture only acquaints us with the true grounds of; and all the prescriptions of Heathen moralists fall as much short of, as the directions of an empiric do of a wise and skilful physician. Avoiding the fears of death, which can alone be through a grounded expectation of a future state of happiness which death leads men to, which cannot be had but through the right understanding of the Word of God. Thus we see the excellency of the matters themselves contained in this revelation of the mind of God to the world.

As the matters themselves are of an excellent nature, so is the manner wherein they are revealed in the Scriptures; and that,

1. In a clear and perspicuous manner; not but there may be still some passages which are hard to be understood, as being either prophetical, or consisting of ambiguous phrases, or containing matters above our comprehension; but all those things which concern the terms of man's salvation, are delivered with the greatest evidence and perspicuity. Who cannot understand what these things mean, "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"—that "without faith it is impossible to please God"—that "without holiness none shall see the Lord"—that "unless we be born again we can never enter into the kingdom of heaven:" these and such like things are so plain and clear, that it is nothing but mens shutting their eyes against the light can keep them from understanding them; God intended these things as directions to men; and is he not able to speak intelligibly when he pleases? He that made the tongue, shall he not speak so as to be understood without an infallible interpreter? especially when it is his design to make known to men the terms of their eternal happiness? Will God judge men at the great day for not believing those things which they could not understand? Strange, that ever men should judge the Scriptures obscure in matters necessary, when the Scripture accounts it so great a judgment for men not to understand them. "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them." Sure Lot's door

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was visible enough, if it were a judgment for the men of Sodom not to see it; and the Scriptures then are plain and intelligible enough, if it be so great a judgment not to understand them.

2. In a powerful and authoritative manner; as the things contained in Scripture do not so much beg acceptance as command it; in that the expressions wherein our duty is concerned, are such as awe men's consciences and pierce to their hearts and to their secret thoughts; all things are open and naked before this Word of God; every secret of the mind and thought of the heart lies open to its stroke and force; "it is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The word is a telescope to discover the great luminaries of the world, the truths of highest concernment to the souls of men, and it is such a microscope as discovers to us the smallest atom of our thoughts, and discerns the most secret intents of the heart. And as far as this light reacheth, it comes with power and authority, as it comes armed with the majesty of that God who reveals it, whose authority extends over the soul and conscience of man in its most secret and hidden recesses.

3. In a pure and unmixed manner; in all other writings, how good soever, we have a great mixture of dross and gold together: here is nothing but pure gold, diamonds without flaws, suns without spots. The most current coins of the world have their alloys of baser metals, there is no such mixture in divine truths; as they all come from the same author, so they all have the same purity. There is a Urim and Thummim upon the whole Scripture, light and perfection in every part of it. In the Philosophers we may meet, it may be, with some scattered fragments of purer metal, amidst abundance of dross and impure ore; here we have whole wedges of gold, the same vein of purity and holiness running through the whole book of Scriptures. Hence it is called "the form of sound words;" here have been no hucksters to corrupt and mix their own inventions with divine truths.

4. In an uniform and agreeable manner. This I grant is not sufficient of itself to prove the Scriptures to be divine, because all men do not contradict themselves in their writings, but yet here are

some peculiar circumstances to be considered in the agreeableness of the parts of Scripture to each other, which are not to be found in mere human writings.

1. That this doctrine was delivered by persons who lived in different ages and times from each other. Usually one age corrects another's faults, and we are apt to pity the ignorance of our predecessors, when it may be our posterity may think us as ignorant, as we do them. But in the Sacred Scripture we read not one age condemning another; we find light still increasing in the series of times in Scripture, but no reflections in any time upon the ignorance, or weakness of the precedent; the dimmest light was sufficient for its age, and was a step to further discovery. Quintilian gives it as the reason of the great uncertainty of Grammar rules, *quia non analogia dimissa cælo formam loquendi dedit*; that which he wanted as to Grammar, we have as to divine truths; they are delivered from heaven, and therefore are always uniform and agreeable to each other.

2. By persons of different interests in the world. God made choice of men of all ranks to be inditers of his oracles, to make it appear it was no matter of state policy, or particular interest, which was contained in his word, which persons of such different interest, could not have agreed in as they do. We have Moses, David, Solomon, persons of royal rank and quality; and can it be any mean thing, which these think it their glory to be penners of? We have Isaiah, Daniel, and other persons of the highest education and accomplishments, and can it be any trivial thing which these employ themselves in? We have Amos, and other prophets in the Old Testament, and the apostles in the New, of the meaner sort of men in the world, yet all these join in concert together; when God tunes their spirits, all agree in the same strain of divine truths, and give light and harmony to each other.

3. By persons in different places and conditions; some in prosperity in their own country, some under banishment and adversity, yet all agreeing in the same substance of doctrine; of which no alteration we see was made, either for the flattery of those in power, or for avoiding miseries and calamities. And under all the different dispensations before, under, and after the law, though the management of things was different, yet the doctrine and design was for substance the same in all.

All the different dispensations agree in the same common principles of religion; the same ground of acceptance with God, and obligation to duty was common to all, though the peculiar instances wherein God was served might be different according to the ages of growth in the church of God. So that this great uniformity considered in these circumstances, is an argument that these things came originally from the same Spirit, though conveyed through different instruments to the knowledge of the world.

5. In a persuasive and convincing manner: and that these ways, 1. Bringing divine truths down to our capacity, clothing spiritual matter in familiar expressions and similitudes, that so they might have the easier admission into our minds. 2. Propounding things as our interest, which are our duty: thence God so frequently in Scripture, recommends our duties to us under all those motives which are wont to have the greatest force on the minds of men; and annexeth gracious promises to our performance of them; and those of the most weighty and concerning things. Of grace, favor, protection, deliverance, audience of prayers, and eternal happiness, and if these will not prevail with men, what motives will? 3. Courting us to obedience, when he might not only command us to obey but punish presently for disobedience. Hence are all those most pathetic and affectionate strains we read in Scripture: "O that there were such a heart within them, that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always, that it might go well with them, and with their children after them!—Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem, wilt thou not be made clean? when shall it once be?—Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel? How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim?—Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.—O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not?" What majesty and yet what sweetness and condescension is there in these expressions! What obstinacy and rebellion is it in men for them to stand out against God, when he thus comes down from his throne of majesty and woo's rebellious sinners to return unto him that they may be pardoned! Such a

matchless and unparalleled strain of rhetoric is there in the Scripture, far above art and insinuations of the most admired orators. Thus we see the peculiar excellency of the manner wherein the matters contained in Scripture are revealed to us: thus we have considered the excellency of the Scripture, as it is a discovery of God's mind to the world.

The Scriptures may be considered as a rule of life, or as a law of God, which is given for the government of the lives of men, and therein the excellency of it lies in the nature of the duties, and the encouragements to the practice of them.

1. In the nature of the duties required, which are most becoming God to require, most reasonable for us to perform.

2. Most becoming God to require, as they are most suitable and agreeable to the divine nature, the imitation of which in our actions is the substance of our religion. Imitation of him in his goodness and holiness, by our constant endeavours of mortifying sin and growing in grace and piety. In his grace and mercy, by our kindness to all men, forgiving the injuries men do unto us, doing good unto our greatest enemies. In his justice and equity, by doing as we would be done by, and keeping a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men. The first takes in the duties of the first, the other the duties of the second table. All acts of piety towards God, are a part of justice; for as Tully saith, *Quid aliud est pietas nisi iustitia adversus deos?* And so our loving God with our whole hearts, our entire and sincere obedience to his will, is a part of natural justice; for thereby we do but render unto God that which is his due from us as we are his creatures. We see then the whole duty of man, the fearing God and keeping his commandments, is as necessary a part of justice, as the rendering to every man his own is.

2. They are most reasonable for us to perform, in that 1. Religion is not only a service of the reasonable faculties which are employed the most in it, the commands of the Scripture reaching the heart most, and the service required being a spiritual service, not lying in meats and drinks, or any outward observations, but in a sanctified temper of heart and mind, which discovers itself in the course of a Christian's life: but 2. The service itself of religion is reasonable; the commands of the gospel are such, as no man's reason which considers them,

them, can doubt of the excellency of them. All natural worship is founded from the dictates of nature, all instituted worship on God's revealed will; and it is one of the prime dictates of nature, that God must be universally obeyed. Besides, God requires nothing but what is apparently man's interest to do; God prohibits nothing but what will destroy him if he doth it; so that the commands of the Scriptures are very just and reasonable.

2. The encouragements are more than proportionable to the difficulty of obedience. God's commands are in themselves easy, and most suitable to our natures. What more rational for a creature than to obey his Maker? All the difficulty of religion ariseth from the corruption of nature. Now God, to encourage men to conquer the difficulties arising thence, hath propounded the strongest motives, and most prevailing arguments to obedience. Such are the considerations of God's love and goodness manifested to the world by sending his Son into it to die for sinners, and to give them an example which they are to follow, and by his readiness through him to pardon the sins, and accept the persons of such who so received him as to walk in him; and by his promises of grace to assist them in the wrestling with the enemies of their salvation. And to all these add that glorious and unconceivable reward which God hath promised to all those who sincerely obey him, and by these things we see how much the encouragements outweigh the difficulties, and that none can make the least pretence that there is no motive sufficient to down-weight the troubles which attend the exercise of obedience to the will of God. So that we see what a peculiar excellency there is in the Scriptures as a rule of life, above all the precepts of mere moralists, the foundation of obedience being laid deeper in man's obligation to serve his Maker, the practice of obedience being carried higher in those most holy precepts which are in Scripture, the reward of obedience being incomparably greater than what men are able to conceive, much less to promise or bestow.

The excellency of the Scriptures appears as they contain in them a covenant of grace, or the transactions between God and man in order to his eternal happiness. The more memorable any transactions are, the more valuable are any authentic records of them. The Scriptures contain

in them the Magna Charta of heaven, an act of pardon with the royal assent of heaven, a proclamation of good-will from God towards men; and can we then set too great a value on that which contains all the remarkable passages between God and the souls of men, in order to their felicity, from the beginning of the world? Can we think, since there is a God in the world of infinite goodness, that he should suffer all mankind to perish inevitably without his propounding any means for escaping of eternal misery? Is God so good to men as to this present life; and can we think, if man's soul be immortal, that he should wholly neglect any offer of good to men as to their eternal welfare? Or is it possible to imagine that man should be happy in another world without God's promising it, and prescribing conditions in order to it? If so, then this happiness is no free gift of God, unless he hath the bestowing and promising of it; and man is no rational agent, unless a reward suppose conditions to be performed in order to the obtaining it; or man may be bound to conditions which were never required of him; or if they must be required, then there must be a revelation of God's will, whereby he doth require them: and if so, then there are some records extant of the transactions between God and man, in order to his eternal happiness: for what reason can we have to imagine that such records, if once extant, should not continue still, especially since the same goodness of God is engaged to preserve such records, which at first did cause them to be indited? Supposing then such records extant somewhere in the world, of these grand transactions between God and men's souls, our business is brought to a period; for what other records are there in the world that can in the least vie with the Scriptures, as to the giving so just an account of all the transactions between God and men from the foundation of the world? which gives us all the steps, methods, and ways whereby God hath made known his mind and will to the world, in order to man's eternal salvation? It remains only then that we adore and magnify the goodness of God in making known his will to us, and that we set a value and esteem on the Scriptures, as the only authentic instruments of that Grand Charter of peace, which God hath revealed in order to man's eternal happiness.

Stillingssea.

§ 177. *The prevalence of Christianity, an argument of its divinity.*

The establishment of the Christian religion among men is the greatest of all miracles. In spite of all the power of Rome; in spite of all the passions, interests, and prejudices of so many nations; so many philosophers; so many different religions; twelve poor fishermen, without art, without eloquence, without power, publish and spread their doctrine throughout the world. In spite of a persecution for three centuries, which seemed every moment ready to extinguish it; in spite of continued and innumerable martyrdoms of persons of all conditions, sexes, and countries; the truth in the end triumphs over error, pursuant to the predictions both of the old and new law. Let any one shew some other religion, which has the same marks of a divine protection.

A powerful conqueror may establish, by his arms, the belief of a religion, which flatters the sensuality of men; a wise legislator may gain himself attention and respect by the usefulness of his laws; a sect in credit, and supported by the civil power, may abuse the credulity of the people: all this is possible; but what could victorious, learned, and superstitious nations see, to induce them so readily to Jesus Christ, who promised them nothing in this world but persecutions and sufferings; who proposed to them the practice of a morality, to which all darling passions must be sacrificed. Is not the conversion of the world to such a religion, without miracles, a greater and more credible one, than even the greatest of those which some refuse to believe? *Fanelon,*

§ 178. *A summary of arguments for the truth of the Gospel.*

He that well considers the force of those arguments which are brought to establish the truth of the Christian religion; that sees how they all (though drawn from different topics) conspire in the most perfect manner to convince the world of the divine original of this faith; would scarce think it possible, that the reason and understanding of mankind should ever oppose it; will therefore conclude there is something more than pure infidelity at the bottom, and that they are not mere scruples of the mind which create so long and violent contention.

If he thinks on the excellency of the

precepts of the Christian religion, he finds them of the fittest nature possible to persuade him to receive it as the contrivance of heaven. They are all so worthy of God, so beneficial and improving to human nature, and so conducive to the welfare and happiness of society.

When he considers the strange and speedy propagation of this faith through the world, with its triumph over the wit and policy, the force and malice of its formidable enemies; and all this accomplished by such methods, as the reason of mankind would have pronounced the most foolish and absurd: he sees here the overruling hand of God, which alone could give it such astonishing successes, by those very ways and means from which its utter confusion was to be expected.

The exact accomplishment of express and unquestionable prophecies, concerning the most remarkable events of the world, is a solemn appeal to all reasonable nature, whether that revelation be not truly divine, which contains such plain and wonderful predictions.

Lastly. The miracles wrought by Jesus Christ and his apostles, in confirmation of this faith and doctrine, are such proofs of the near concern which heaven had therein; that he who considers them, and at the same time calls Christianity an imposture, must either take pains to avoid knowing the finger of God, when he sees it, or else do infinitely worse, by ascribing the manifest effects thereof to mean artifice, or diabolical power.

From these topics the truth of Christianity has been so substantially argued, and so clearly proved; that, by all the rules of right reason in use amongst mankind, it is rendered plainly absurd and irrational to reject it. One need not wish to see an adversary reduced to worse extremities, than one of those arguments well managed and pressed home would reduce him to; provided he were kept from excursions, and obliged to return no answers but what were directly to the purpose.

Humphrey Dutton,

§ 179. *The facts related in the Evangelists may be depended on.*

That there was such a person as Jesus of Nazareth, in Galilee, in the time of Tiberius Cæsar, the Roman emperor; that he had a company of poor men for his disciples; that he and his disciples went about the country of Judæa, teaching and preaching;

ing; that he was put to death upon the cross, after the Roman manner, under Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea; that after his death, his disciples went about into all, or most parts of the then known world, teaching and preaching, that this Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and Saviour of the world, and that he was risen from the dead, and gone into heaven; that in a few years they converted a very great number of people, in all places, to this belief; that the professors of this belief were called Christians; that they were most cruelly persecuted, and many thousands of them put to death, and that with the most exquisite torments, for no other reason, but because they were Christians; that these persecutions were several times renewed against them, for the space of about three hundred years; and yet, for all this, that the number of Christians daily increased, and that not only idiots and unlearned men, but great scholars and philosophers were converted to Christianity, even in the times of persecution; all this, being merely matter of fact, was never yet denied by the greatest enemies of the Christian religion. And, indeed, these things are so abundantly testified by the histories, and other writings of those times; and have been so generally received for truth, as well by the opposers as believers of Christianity, by a constant, universal, and uninterrupted tradition, from those days, even unto this time; that a man may as well deny the truth of any, or of all, the histories of the world, as of this. *Archbishop Synge.*

§ 180. *Superiority of the Gospel to all other writings, an argument of its truth.*

To what was it owing, that the Jewish writers should have such lovely and great ideas of God, and such just notions of the worship due to him, far above any thing which we meet with in the writings of the greatest lights of the Heathen world; every one of which either patronized idolatry, or fell into errors of worse consequence? Can it be accounted for by the force of natural or human assistances? No, the eminent philosophers of Athens and Rome equalled them, it is certain, in natural abilities, and exceeded them confessedly in the superstructures of acquired knowledge, and all the advantages of a refined education. It must be therefore owing to some supernatural or divine helps; and none, but he, in whom are contained all the treasures of

wisdom, could have enriched their minds to such a degree, and furnished such a vast expence of thought. If Judea was ennobled by these exalted notions, of which other nations, who were sunk into the dregs of polytheism and idolatry, were destitute; if the kindly dew of heaven descended on this fleece only, while all the earth around betrayed a want of refreshing moisture; this was the Lord's doing, and ought to be marvellous in our eyes.

Had God revealed himself to the Greeks, or some other nation famed for their curious researches into every branch of literature, and for the depths of wisdom and policy; those truths, which were so many emanations from the great fountain of light, would have been looked upon as the result of their penetration, and their own discoveries: but by communicating his will to a people of no inventive and enterprising genius, of no enlarged reach and compass of thought; such suspicions are avoided; and the proofs of a revelation more conspicuous and illustrious. And this may be one reason among others, why, at a time when the rest of the world were bigoted to superstition, idolatry, and a false religion, God singled out this nation, in that point not so corrupt as others, to be the guardian and depositary of the true.

If nothing recommended the Scripture but this single consideration, that all those collected beams of spiritual light center in it alone, which were widely diffused amidst a variety of treatises, and lost amidst a crowd of palpable absurdities; even this would be no improbable argument of its divinity: but this is not all: let us, in order to compile an adequate, unerring standard of religious truths; take in all the assistances we can get from all the philosophers in Greece, from Tully at Rome, nay even from Confucius as far as China; and yet, after all, the scheme will be defective in what the Scriptures have recommended, a pure, rational worship of God only, in spirit and in truth, a fulness of pardon for every sin upon repentance, and the nobleness of the rewards hereafter. The love of God will not be required in so high a degree, as it is in the Scriptures; nor enforced by so strong a motive as our Saviour's dying for mankind has done; nor our charity and love to the distressed recommended by so powerful an incentive, as that our Redeemer has made them his representatives, and will place to his own

account, whatever was done for his sake to them.

One may challenge any man to produce, before Christianity, among the Heathen world, such a complete system of morality, reaching all the duties of life, without any defect; and full without overflowing, or any redundancy, as the Scriptures contain.

—And it is needless to tell any man of plain sense, that there must be always a proportion between the cause and the effect. Now, if we exclude the divine power, what proportion can we find between the causes of Christianity, and Christianity itself? Christianity is a religion, which has disabused the world, and rescued it from those many vicious practices, such as the exposing of infants, polygamy, &c. which were universally defended among the Pagans; and from human sacrifices, and from innumerable abominable and brutal rites; a religion so perfective of human nature, and so expressive of the divine; that we want ideas to carry us to a conception of any thing beyond it. And who were the authors or causes of this religion? Why a set of men bred up in low life to mean employments, which cramp the native powers of the mind. And can we seriously think, that a set of unlettered, preenterprising men, could open several rich mines of truth, which had escaped the laborious researches of the profoundest scholars, and the happy sagacity of the most penetrating wits?

Since therefore every effect must have a competent and proportionable cause; and since the supposed natural causes and authors of Christianity, considered as mere men, exclusive of divine inspiration, were plainly unequal to the task, nor could ever have brought to light such doctrines, as exceeded whatever the philosophers before had done; though, laying aside their dregs, we should draw off the very flower and spirit of their writings: it is evident, we must have recourse to some supernatural and adequate cause, which interested itself in this affair. And to whom, but to the Father of Light, in whom there is no darkness at all, can we be indebted, that now, persons of the slenderest capacities may view those elevated and beneficial truths in the strongest point of light, which the finest spirits of the gentile world could not before fully ascertain; that our meanest mechanics, with a moderate share of application, may have juster and fuller notions of God's attributes, of eternal happiness, of every duty respecting their Maker, mankind, and

themselves, than the most distinguished scholars among the Heathens could attain to, after a life laid out in painful researches? *Seed.*

§ 181. *Various reasonings in favour of Christianity.*

God only knows, and God only can tell, whether he will forgive, and upon what terms he will forgive the offences done against him; what mode of worship he requires; what helps he will afford us; and what condition he will place us in hereafter. All this God actually has told us in the gospel. It was to tell us this, he sent his Son into the world, whose mission was confirmed by the highest authority, by signs from heaven, and miracles on earth; whose life and doctrine are delivered down to us by the most unexceptionable witnesses, who sealed their testimony with their blood; who were too curious and incredulous to be themselves imposed upon, too honest and sincere, too plain and artless, to impose upon others.

What then can be the reason that men still refuse to see, and persist in "loving darkness rather than light?" They will tell you perhaps that it is because the gospel is full of incredible mysteries; but our Saviour tells you, and he tells you much truer, that it is "because their deeds are evil." The mysteries and difficulties of the gospel can be no real objection to any man that considers what mysteries occur, and what insuperable objections may be started, in almost every branch of human knowledge; and how often we are obliged, in our most important concerns, to decide and to act upon evidence, incumbered with far greater difficulties than any that are to be found in Scripture. If we can admit no religion that is not free from mystery, we must, I doubt, be content without any religion. Even the religion of nature itself, the whole constitution both of the natural and the moral world, is full of mystery; and the greatest mystery of all would be, if, with so many irresistible marks of truth, Christianity should at last prove false. It is not then because the gospel has too little light for these men that they reject it, but because it has too much. For "every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." The light of the gospel is too prying and inquisitive for such an one. It reveals certain things which he could wish to conceal from all the world, and if possible from himself. Not

is this all; it not only reveals, but it reproves them. It strikes him with an evidence he cannot bear; an evidence not only of its own truth, but of his unworthy conduct. The gospel does indeed offend him; but it is not his understanding, it is his conscience, that is shocked: he could easily credit what it requires him to believe; but he cannot, or rather he will not, practise what it commands him to do.

It is plain that such a man cannot possibly admit a revelation that condemns him; and it is as plain that the man of virtue cannot spurn the hand that is graciously stretched out to reward him. If he is a truly virtuous man, that is, one who sincerely labours to know his duty, and sincerely intends to perform it, he cannot but wish for more light to guide him in the investigation, more assistance to support him in the discharge of it, more happiness to crown his perseverance in it, than bare reason alone can afford him. This is what all the best and wisest Heathens most ardently desired, what nature has been continually looking out for with the utmost earnestness of expectation. When with a mind thus disposed he sits down to examine the gospel, suggest to me the least shadow of a reason why he should reject it? He finds in it a religion, pure, holy, and benevolent, as the God that gave it. He finds not only its moral precepts but even its sublimest mysteries, calculated to promote internal sanctity, vital piety, universal philanthropy. He finds it throughout so great and noble, so congenial to the finest feelings, and most generous sentiments of his soul; that he cannot but wish it may be true, and never yet, I believe, did any good man wish it to be true, but he actually found it so. He sees in it every expectation of nature answered, every infirmity supported, every want supplied, every terror dissipated, every hope confirmed; nay, he sees that God "has done exceeding abundantly above all that he could either ask or think;" that he has given him, what reason could hardly have the idea of, eternal happiness in a life to come.

It is not a matter of indifference whether you embrace Christianity or not. Though reason could answer all the purposes of revelation, which is far, very far from being the case, yet you are not at liberty to make it your sole guide, if there be such a thing as a true revelation. We are the subjects of the Almighty; and whether we will acknowledge it or not, we live, and cannot but live, under his government.

His will is the law of his kingdom. If he has made no express declaration of his will, we must collect it as well as we can from what we know of his nature and our own. But if he has expressly declared his will, that is the law we are to be governed by. We may indeed refuse to be governed by it, but it is at our peril if we do; for if it proves to be a true declaration of his will, to reject it is rebellion.

But to reject or receive it, you may alledge, is not a thing in your own power. Belief depends not on your will, but your understanding. And will the righteous judge of the earth condemn you for want of understanding? No; but he may and will condemn you for the wrong conduct of your understanding. It is not indeed in your power to believe whatever you please, whether credible or incredible; but it is in your power to consider thoroughly, whether a supposed incredibility be real or only apparent. It is in your power to bestow a greater or less degree of attention on the evidence before you. It is in your power to examine it with an earnest desire to find out the truth, and a firm resolution to embrace it wherever you do find it; or on the contrary, to bring with you a heart full of incorrigible depravity, or invincible prepossessions. Have you then truly and honestly done every thing that is confessedly in your power, towards forming a right judgment of revelation? Have you ever laid before yourself in one view the whole collective evidence of Christianity? The consistence, harmony, and connection, of all its various parts; the long chain of prophecies undeniably completed in it; the astonishing and well-attested miracles that attended it; the perfect sanctity of its author; the purity of its precepts; the sublimity of its doctrines; the amazing rapidity of its progress; the illustrious company of confessors, saints, and martyrs, who died to confirm its truth; together with an infinite number of collateral proofs and subordinate circumstances, all concurring to form such a body of evidence, as no other truth in the world can shew; such as must necessarily bear down, by its own weight and magnitude, all trivial objections to particular parts? Surely these things are not trifles; surely they at least demand seriousness and attention. Have you then done the gospel this common piece of justice? Have you ever sat down to consider it with impartiality and candour; without any favourite vice or early prejudice, without any fond-

nels for applause, or novelty, or refinement, to mislead you? Have you examined it with the same care and diligence, that you would examine a title to an estate? Have you enquired for proper books? Have you read the defences of revelation as well as the attacks upon it? Have you in difficult points applied for the opinion of wise and learned friends; just as you would consult the ablest lawyers when your property was concerned, or the most skilful physicians when your life was at stake? If you can truly say, that you have done all these things; if you have faithfully bestowed on these enquiries, all the leisure and abilities you are master of, and called in every help within your reach, there is little danger of any material doubts remaining upon your mind.—St. John's affection for his departed friend did not terminate with his life. It was continued after his crucifixion, to his memory, his character, and his religion. After a long life spent in teaching and suffering for that religion, he concluded it with a work of infinite utility, the revival of the three gospels already written, and the addition of his own to supply what they had omitted. With this view principally he gives us several of our Saviour's discourses with his disciples, which are no where else to be met with; and it is very observable, that these, as well as the many other occurrences of his life, which he introduces as supplemental to the other evangelists, are such as set his beloved master in the most amiable and graceful point of view, such as a favourite disciple would be most likely to select, and most disposed to enlarge upon. Of this kind, for instance, are our Saviour's discourse with the woman of Samaria; the cure of the infirm man at the pool of Bethesda; the acquittal of the woman taken in adultery; the description of the good shepherd and his sheep; the affecting history of Lazarus; the condescending and expressive act of washing his disciples feet; his inimitably tender and consolatory discourse to them just before his suffering; his most admirable prayer on the same occasion; and his pathetic recommendation of his sheep to St. Peter after his resurrection. These passages are to be found only in St. John's gospel, and whoever reads them with attention will discover in them plain indications, not only of a heaven-directed hand, but of a feeling and a grateful heart, smitten with the love of a departed friend, penetrated with a sense of

his distinguished kindness, perfectly well informed and thoroughly interested, in every tender scene that it describes, soothing itself with the recollection of little domestic incidents and familiar conversations, and tracing out not only the larger and more obvious features of the favourite character, but even those finer and more delicate strokes in it, which would have eluded a less observing eye, or less faithful memory, than those of a beloved companion and friend.—

Our divine lawgiver showed his wisdom equally in what he enjoined, and what he left unnoticed. He knew exactly, what no Pagan philosopher ever knew, where to be silent and where to speak.—

That which principally attracts our notice in St. John's writings, and in his conduct, is, a simplicity and singleness of heart, a fervent piety, an unbounded benevolence, an unaffected modesty, humility, meekness, and gentleness of disposition. These are evidently the great characteristic virtues that took the lead in his soul, and break forth in every page of his gospel and his epistles.—To know what friendship really is, we must look for it in that sacred repository of every thing great and excellent, the gospel of Christ.—

Our Saviour has assured us that he will consider every real Christian as united to him by closer ties than even those of friendship. This assurance is given us in one of those noble strains of eloquence which are so common in the Sacred Writings. Our Lord being told that his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him, he gives a turn to this little incident, perfectly new, and inexpressibly tender and affectionate. "Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hands towards his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." *Bishop Porteus.*

§ 182. *Difficulties in the Word of God to be expected, with the duty of examining its evidence.*

Origen has observed, with singular sagacity, that he who believes the Scripture to have proceeded from him who is the Author of nature, may well expect to find the same sort of difficulties in it, as are found in the constitution of nature. And in a like way

way of reflection it may be added, that he who denies the Scripture to have been from God, upon account of these difficulties, may, for the very same reason, deny the world to have been from him.—

Christianity being supposed either true or credible, it is unspeakable irreverence, and really the most presumptuous rashness, to treat it as a light matter. It can never justly be esteemed of little consequence, till it be positively supposed false. Nor do I know a higher and more important obligation which we are under, than that, of examining most seriously into the evidence of it, supposing its credibility; and of embracing it upon supposition of its truth. *Bulser.*

§ 183. *The information the Gospel gives most desirable.*

The Christian revelation has such pretences, at least, as may make it worthy of a particular consideration: it pretends, to come from heaven; to have been delivered by the Son of God; to have been confirmed by undeniable miracles and prophecies; to have been ratified by the blood of Christ and his apostles, who died in asserting its truth: it can shew likewise an innumerable company of martyrs and confessors: its doctrines are pure and holy, its precepts just and righteous; its worship is a reasonable service, refined from the errors of idolatry and superstition, and spiritual, like the God who is the object of it: it offers the aid and assistance of heaven to the weakness of nature; which makes the religion of the gospel to be as practicable, as it is reasonable; it promises infinite rewards to obedience, and threatens eternal punishment to obstinate offenders; which makes it of the utmost consequence to us soberly to consider it, since every one who rejects it stakes his own soul against the truth of it.—

Look into the Gospel; there you will find every reasonable hope of nature, nay every reasonable suspicion of nature, cleared up, and confirmed; every difficulty answered and removed. Do the present circumstances of the world lead you to suspect that God could never be the author of such corrupt and wretched creatures as men now are? Your suspicions are just and well founded. "God made man upright;" but through the temptation of the devil sin entered; and death and destruction followed after.

Do you suspect, from the success of virtue and vice in this world, that the providence of God does not interpose to protect the righteous from violence, or to punish the wicked? The suspicion is not without ground. God leaves his best servants here to be tried oftentimes with affliction and sorrow, and permits the wicked to flourish and abound. The call of the gospel is not to honour and riches here, but to take up our cross and follow Christ.

Do you judge, from comparing the present state of the world with the natural notion you have of God, and of his justice and goodness, that there must needs be another state in which justice shall take place? You reason right; and the gospel confirms the judgment. God has appointed a day to judge the world in righteousness: then those who mourn shall rejoice, those who weep shall laugh, and the persecuted and afflicted servants of God shall be heirs of his kingdom.

Have you sometimes misgivings of mind? Are you tempted to mistrust this judgment, when you see the difficulties which surround it on every side; some which affect the soul in its separate state, some which affect the body in its state of corruption and dissolution? Look to the gospel: there these difficulties are accounted for; and you need no longer puzzle yourself with dark questions concerning the state, condition, and nature of separate spirits, or concerning the body, however to appearance lost and destroyed; for the body and soul shall once more meet to part no more, but to be happy for ever. In this case the learned cannot doubt, and the ignorant may be sure, that 'tis the man, the very man himself, who shall rise again: for an union of the same soul and body is as certainly the restoration of the man, as the dividing them was the destruction.

Would you know who it is that gives this assurance? 'Tis one who is able to make good his word: one who loved you so well as to die for you; yet one too great to be held a prisoner in the grave. No; he rose with triumph and glory, the first-born from the dead, and will in like manner call from the dust of the earth all those who put their trust and confidence in him.

But who is this, you'll say, who was subjected to death, and yet had power over death?

death? How could so much weakness and so much strength meet together? That God has the power of life, we know; but then he cannot die: that man is mortal, we know; but then he cannot give life.

Consider; does this difficulty deserve an answer, or does it not? Our blessed Saviour lived among us in a low and poor condition, exposed to much ill treatment from his jealous countrymen: when he fell into their power, their rage knew no bounds: they reviled him, insulted him, mocked him, scourged him, and at last nailed him to a cross, where by a shameful and wretched death he finished a life of sorrow and affliction. Did we know no more of him than this, upon what ground could we pretend to hope that he will be able to save us from the power of death? We might say with the disciples, "We trusted this had been he who should have saved Israel;" but he is dead, he is gone, and all our hopes are buried in his grave.

If you think this ought to be answered, and that the faith of a Christian cannot be a reasonable faith, unless it be able to account for this seeming contradiction; I beseech you then never more complain of the gospel for furnishing an answer to this great objection, for removing this stumbling-block out of the way of our faith. He was a man, and therefore he died. He was the son of God, and therefore he rose from the dead, and will give life to all his true disciples. He it was who formed this world and all things in it, and for the sake of man was content to become man, and to taste death for all, that all through him may live. This is a wonderful piece of knowledge which God has revealed to us in his gospel; but he has not revealed it to raise our wonder, but to confirm and establish our faith in him to whom he hath committed all power, "whom he hath appointed heir of all things."

Had the gospel required of us to expect from Christ the redemption of our souls and bodies, and given us no reason to think that Christ was endowed with power equal to the work, we might justly have complained; and it would have been a standing reproach, that Christians believe they know nor what. But to expect redemption from the Son of God, the resurrection of our bodies from the same hand which at first created and formed them, are rational and well-founded acts of faith;

and it is the Christian's glory, that he knows in whom he has believed.

That the world was made by the son of God, is a proposition with which reason has no fault to find: that he who made the world should have power to renew it to life again, is highly consonant to reason. All the mystery lies in this, that so high and great a person should condescend to become man, and subject to death, for the sake of mankind. But are we fit persons to complain of this transcendent mysterious love? or, does it become us to quarrel with the kindness of our blessed Lord towards us, only because it is greater than we can conceive? No; it becomes us to bless and to adore this exceeding love, by which we are saved from condemnation, by which we expect to be rescued from death; knowing that the power of our blessed Lord is equal to his love, and that he is "able to subdue all things to himself."

Sherlock.

§ 184. *Christ and Mahomet compared.*

Go to your natural religion, lay before her Mahomet and his disciples arrayed in armour and in blood, riding in triumph over the spoils of thousands and ten thousands, who fell by his victorious sword. Shew her the cities which he set in flames, the countries which he ravaged and destroyed, and the miserable distress of all the inhabitants of the earth. When she has viewed him in this scene, carry her into his retirements, shew her the prophet's chamber, his concubines and wives, and let her see his adulteries, and hear him alledge revelation and his divine commission to justify his lusts and his oppressions. When she is tired with this prospect, then shew her the blessed Jesus, humble and meek, doing good to all the sons of men, patiently instructing the ignorant and the perverse. Let her see him in his most retired privacies, let her follow him to the mount and hear his devotions and supplications to God. Carry her to his table, to view his poor fare and hear his heavenly discourse. Let her see him injured but not provoked; let her attend him to the tribunal, and consider the patience with which he endured the scoffs and reproaches of his enemies. Lead her to his cross, and let her view him in the agonies of death, and hear his last prayer for his persecutors, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they

they do." When natural religion has viewed both, ask which is the prophet of God?—But her answer we have already had, when she saw part of this scene through the eyes of the Centurion who attended at the cross; by him she said, "Truly this was the Son of God."

Sherlock.

§ 185. *The absurdity and madness of infidelity.*

If a person that had a fair estate in reversion, which in all probability he would speedily be possessed of, and of which he might reasonably promise to himself a long and happy enjoyment, should be assured by some skilful physician, that in a very short time he would inevitably fall into a disease which would so totally deprive him of his understanding and memory, that he should lose the knowledge of all things without him, nay all consciousness and sense of his own person and being: if, I say, upon a certain belief of this indication, the man should appear overjoyed at the news, and be mightily transported with the discovery and expectation, would not all that saw him be astonished at such behaviour? Would they not be forward to conclude, that the distemper had seized him already, and even then the miserable creature was become a mere fool and an idiot? Now the carriage of our atheists is infinitely more amazing than this; no dotage so insatiate, no phrensy so extravagant as theirs. They have been educated in a religion that instructed them in the knowledge of a Supreme Being? a Spirit most excellently glorious, superlatively powerful, and wise, and good, Creator of all things out of nothing; that hath endued the sons of men, his peculiar favourites, with a rational spirit, and hath placed them as spectators in this noble theatre of the world, to view and applaud these glorious scenes of earth and heaven, the workmanship of his hands; that hath furnished them in general with a sufficient store of all things, either necessary or convenient for life; and, particularly to such as fear and obey him, hath promised a supply of all wants, a deliverance and protection from all dangers: that they that seek him, shall want no manner of thing that is good. Who, besides his munificence to them in this life, "hath so loved the world, that he sent his only-begotten Son, the express image of his substance," and partaker of his eternal nature and glory, to bring life

and immortality to light, and to tender them to mankind upon fair and gracious terms; that if they submit to his easy yoke and light burden, and observe his commandments, which are not grievous, he then gives them the promise of eternal salvation; he hath reserved for them in heaven, "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away;" he hath prepared for them an unspeakable, unconceivable perfection of joy and bliss, things that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man." What a delightful ravishing hypothesis of religion is this! And in this religion they have had their education. Now let us suppose some great professor in atheism to suggest to some of these men, that all this is mere dream and imposture; that there is no such excellent being, as they suppose, that created and preserves them; that all about them is dark senseless matter, driven on by the blind impulses of fatality and fortune; that men first sprung up, like mushrooms, out of the mud and slime of the earth; and that all their thoughts, and the whole of what they call soul, are only the various action and re-percussion of small particles of matter, kept a-while a moving by some mechanism and clock-work, which finally must cease and perish by death. If it be true then (as we daily find it is) that men listen with complacency to these horrid suggestions; if they let go their hope of everlasting life with willingness and joy; if they entertain the thoughts of final perdition with exultation and triumph; ought they not to be esteemed most notorious fools, even destitute of common sense, and abandoned to a callousness and numbness of soul?

What then, is heaven itself, with its pleasures for evermore, to be parted with so unconcernedly? Is a crown of righteousness, a crown of life, to be surrendered with laughter? Is an exceeding and eternal weight of glory too light in the balance against the hopeless death of the atheist, and utter extinction?

Bentley.

§ 186. *The books of the New Testament could not have been forged in the dark ages.*

Some adversaries of the Christian doctrine have been so bold and shameless as to deny in a lump the antiquity claimed by each of the New Testament books, i. e.

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to deny that they were written in the first century, by the writers to whom they are ascribed. Toland is charged with having betrayed a suspicion of this sort in his life of Milton: but in his *Amyntor*, or defence of the life of Milton, he disavows his having meant the writings, which we receive as inspired, by the words upon which the charge is grounded. But an anonymous Italian, ventured, in a letter to Le Clerc, to throw out the following suspicion: It is possible that in the fifth century, about the time when the Goths over-ran Italy, four men of superior understanding might unite in inventing and forging the writings of the apostles, as well as of the fathers, and falsify some passages of Josephus and Suetonius, in order to introduce into the world, by the means of this fraud, a new and more rational religion.

These four men, who must have been very conversant in the Jewish theology, and Heathen antiquity, are here charged with the immense labour of forging the writings of the fathers, and of inventing that diversity of style and sentiment, by which they were distinguished from each other. But it would not have been safe for our sceptic, to attribute to them a less laborious enterprize. His credulity, which in the present age men commonly affect to call by the name of unbelief, would have been shocked by the testimony of the fathers, had he confined his imputation of forgery to the apostles. Le Clerc returned a strong and sensible answer to his letter, in his *Bibliothèque ancienne et moderne*, tom. xxi. p. 440.

However, there are very few unbelievers among Christians, who have thrown out this suspicion against the writings of the apostles; and indeed it is so manifestly groundless, that whoever does throw it out, must be impudently invincible by truth and argument. For,

1. The style of the apostles is so different, that their epistles could not without great difficulty be written by the same hand. St. Paul is uniform in all his epistles; his manner is plainly different from that of other writers, and very difficult to be imitated. At least all the epistles to which his name is prefixed are the work of one hand. St. John again is totally different from him; and whoever writes in a style like that of St. Paul, cannot imitate the style of St. John.

2. In order to invent writings, and as-

cribe them to persons who lived some centuries ago, it is necessary to have an understanding and judgment, and a knowledge of history and antiquity beyond the powers of man, else the inventor must commit frequent errors. Now the writings of the New Testament are unexceptionable in this respect. The better we are acquainted with Jewish and Heathen antiquity, with the history of the Romans, and the ancient geography of Palestine, the face of which country was totally changed by the conquests of the Romans; the more clearly we discern their agreement with the New Testament, even in some circumstances so minute, that probably they would have escaped the most artful and most circumspect imposture. The commentators abound with observations from antiquity, which may serve to exemplify this: the learned Dr. Lardner in particular has done eminent service in this respect.

3. The most ancient fathers, even those who were contemporary with the apostles, Clemens Romanus, for instance, and Ignatius, quote the books of the New Testament, and ascribe them to the apostles. We must therefore either suppose, with the Italian abovementioned, that all the writings of the fathers for some centuries were forged: a suspicion which may be more effectually removed by medicinal applications than by the force of argument: or we must admit the books of the New Testament, which they quote, to be in fact as ancient as they are pretended to be.

4. There are some very old versions of the New Testament; the Latin at least, seems to have been done so early as in the first century after the birth of Christ; and it is highly probable that the Syriac version is not less ancient.

Is it possible to suppose that some centuries after Christ, when the Hebrew tongue was not understood in the western church, either some blind chance proved so fortunate, or the cunning of some Italian impostors was attended with so much thought and learning, as to add to the credibility of the writings forged for the apostles, by an extempore Latin version full of Hebrew idioms, and by a Syriac interpretation? not to mention the Gothic translation of Ulphilas, which, besides, was done before the interruption of the Goths into Italy.

But if these writings are as ancient as they

they are pretended to be, they certainly carry with them an undeniable and indelible mark of their divine original: for the epistles refer to certain miraculous gifts, which are said to have been imparted by the imposition of hands, and to have been conferred by God, in confirmation of the oral and written doctrine of the apostles. If these epistles are ancient and genuine, and written by St. Paul to the churches to which they are addressed, then none can deny these miracles. The matter is important enough to merit further attention.

St. Paul's first epistle to the Thessalonians is addressed to a church which was hardly founded, to which he had not preached the gospel more than three Sabbath days, Acts xvii. 2. He had been obliged to quit this church abruptly, on account of an impending persecution, ver. 10. and being apprehensive lest the persecution should cause some to waver in the faith, he lays before them, in the three first chapters, arguments to prove the truth of his gospel. The first of these arguments is, that which confirmed his doctrine at Thessalonica, chap. i. 6—10: "For our gospel," says he, "came not to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost." Power is an expression made use of elsewhere in the New Testament to signify miraculous acts. Admit him only to have been a rational man, and we cannot suppose him to write this to an infant church, if no member thereof had ever seen a miracle of his, or received a miraculous gift, of the Holy Ghost, by the imposition of his hands.

He appeals to the same proof, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, who were extremely dissatisfied with him and his manner of teaching, 1 Cor. ii. 4. "My speech, and my preaching, was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit, and of power." The spirit is a word he elsewhere uses to signify the extraordinary gifts of the "spirit," such as the gift of tongues, &c.—The Hebrews were on the point of falling off from Christianity, yet he confidently tells them how great their condemnation will be, if they deny a doctrine, to which God had borne "witness with signs and wonders, and gifts of the Holy Ghost." Heb. xi. 4. and chap. vi. 4. 5. He remonstrates to them, that they had been "made partakers of the Holy Ghost," and

had tasted the powers of the world to come." In like manner he endeavours to convince the Galatians, who had deserted the pure doctrine of the gospel, that the law of Moses was abolished; by putting to them this question, "Received ye the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Gal. iii. 2. Is it possible, that a deceiver of a sound understanding, such as St. Paul's epistles shew him to have possessed, should refer the enemies of his religion, of his office, and of the doctrines which distinguished him from other sects of his religion, not only to the miracles which he pretends to have wrought, but to miraculous gifts which he pretends to have communicated to them, if they had it in their power to answer, that they knew nothing of these miraculous gifts?

In the 12th, 13th, and 14th chapters of the first to the Corinthians, he reprehends the abuse of certain miraculous gifts of tongues, and prescribes a better application of them. If he actually wrote this to the Corinthians, and they had no miraculous gifts, no knowledge of foreign tongues, then St. Paul is not an impostor but a madman, which, I apprehend, is not the charge of unbelievers against him.

But if these miracles be true, then the doctrine, and the book in confirmation of which they were wrought, are divine; and the more certainly so, as there is no room for deception. A juggler may persuade me, that he performs miracles, but he can never persuade me, and a whole body of men of sound intellects, that he has communicated to us the gift of working miracles, and speaking foreign languages, unless we can work the miracles, and speak the languages.

Michaelis.

§ 187. *The Extent, Object, and End of the prophetic Scheme.*

If we look into the writings of the Old and New Testament we find, first, That prophecy is of a prodigious extent; that it commenced from the lapse of man, and reaches to the consummation of all things; that, for many ages, it was delivered darkly, to few persons, and with large intervals from the date of one prophecy to that of another; but, at length, became more clear, more frequent, and was uniformly carried on in the line of one people, separated from the rest of the world, among other reasons assigned, for this principally, to be the repository of the Divine Oracles; that, with

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some intermission, the spirit of prophecy subsisted among that people, to the coming of Christ; that he himself and his apostles exercised this power in the most conspicuous manner; and left behind them many predictions, recorded in the books of the New Testament, which profess to respect very distant events, and even run out to the end of time, or, in St. John's expression, to that period, "when the mystery of God shall be perfected."

2. Further, besides the extent of this prophetic scheme, the dignity of the person, whom it concerns, deserves our consideration. He is described in terms, which excite the most august and magnificent ideas. He is spoken of, indeed, sometimes as being "the seed of the woman," and as "the son of man," yet so as being at the same time of more than mortal extraction. He is even represented to us, as being superior to men and angels; as far above all principality and power, above all that is accounted great, whether in heaven or in earth; as the word and wisdom of God; as the eternal Son of the Father; as "the heir of all things, by whom he made the worlds;" as "the brightness of his glory," and the express image of his person."

We have no words to denote greater ideas, than these; the mind of man cannot elevate itself to nobler conceptions. Of such transcendent worth and excellence is that Jesus said to be, to whom all the prophets bear witness!

3. Lastly, the declared purpose, for which the Messiah, prefigured by so long a train of prophecy, came into the world, corresponds to all the rest of the representation. It was not to deliver an oppressed nation from civil tyranny, or to erect a great civil empire, that is, to achieve one of those acts, which history accounts most heroic. No; it was not a mighty state, a victor people—

Non res Romanæ perituraque regna—
that was worthy to enter into the contemplation of this divine person. It was another and far sublimer purpose, which he came to accomplish; a purpose, in comparison of which, all our policies are poor and little, and all the performances of man as nothing. It was to deliver a world from ruin; to abolish sin and death; to purify and immortalize human nature; and thus, in the most exalted sense of the words, to be the Saviour of all men, and the blessing of all nations.

There is no exaggeration in this account, I deliver the undoubted sense, if not always the very words of Scripture.

Consider then to what this representation amounts. Let us unite the several parts of it, and bring them to a point. A spirit of prophecy pervading all time—characterizing one person, of the highest dignity—and proclaiming the accomplishment of one purpose, the most beneficent, the most divine, that imagination itself can project.—Such is the scriptural delineation, whether we will receive it or no, of that œconomy, which we call prophetic!

And now then (if we must be reasoning from our ideas of fit and right, to the rectitude of the divine conduct) let me ask, in one word, whether, on the supposition that it should ever please the moral Governor of the world to reveal himself by prophecy at all, we can conceive him to do it, in a "manner," or for "ends," more worthy of him? Does not the "extent" of the scheme correspond to our best ideas of that infinite Being, to whom all duration is but a point, and to whose view all time is equally present? Is not the "object" of this scheme, "the Lamb of God that was slain from the foundation of the world," worthy, in our conceptions, of all the honour that can be reflected upon him by so vast and splendid an œconomy? Is not the "end" of this scheme such as we should think most fit for such a scheme of prophecy to predict, and for so divine a person to accomplish?

You see, every thing here is of a piece; all the parts of this dispensation are astonishingly great, and perfectly harmonize with each other. *Hurd.*

§ 188. *Our philosophical principles must be learnt from the book of Nature, our religious from the book of Grace.*

In order to attain right conceptions of the constitution of Nature, as laid before us in the volume of Creation, we are not to assume hypotheses and notions of our own, and from them, as from established principles, to account for the several phenomena that occur; but we are to begin with the effects themselves, and from these, diligently collected in a variety of well-chosen experiments, to investigate the causes which produce them. By such a method, directed and improved by the helps of a sublime geometry, we may reasonably hope to arrive at certainty in our physical enquiries, and on the basis of fact and demonstration may erect a system of the world, that

that shall be true, and worthy of its author. Whereas, by pursuing a contrary path, our conjectures at the best will be precarious and doubtful; nor can we ever be sure that the most ingenious theories we can frame are any thing more than a well-invented and consistent fable.

With the same caution we are to proceed in examining the constitution of Grace, as unfolded to our view in the volume of Redemption. Here also we are not to exco-
gitate conceits and fancies of our own, and then distort the expressions of holy writ, to favour our misshapen imaginations; but we are first to advert to what God has actually made known of himself in the declarations of his word; and from this, carefully interpreted by the rules of sound criticism and logical deduction, to elicit the genuine doctrines of revelation. By such an exertion of our intellectual powers, assisted and enlightened by the aids which human literature is capable of furnishing, we may advance with ease and safety in our knowledge of the divine dispensations, and on the rock of Scripture may build a system of religion, that shall approve itself to our most enlarged understandings, and be equally secured from the injuries and insults of enthusiasts and unbelievers. On the other hand, previously to determine from our own reason what it is fit for a being of infinite wisdom to do, and from that pretended fitness to infer that he has really done it, is a mode of procedure that is little suited to the imbecility of our mental faculties, and still less calculated to lead us to an adequate comprehension of the will or works of Heaven. *Hallifax.*

§ 189. *Comparison between Heathenism and Christianity.*

The apostle saith, "After the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God to save believers by the foolishness of preaching." That is to say, since the mere systems of reason were eventually insufficient for the salvation of mankind; and since it was impossible that their speculations should obtain the true knowledge of God; God took another way to instruct them: he revealed by preaching of the gospel what the light of nature could not discover, so that the system of Jesus Christ, and his apostles, supplied all, that was wanting in the systems of the ancient philosophers.

But it is not in relation to the ancient philosophers only, that we mean to con-
sider the proposition in our text; we will

examine it also in reference to modern philosophy. Our philosophers know more than all those of Greece knew: but their science, which is of unspeakable advantage, while it contains itself within its proper sphere, becomes a source of errors, when it is extended beyond it. Human reason now lodgeth itself in new intrenchments, when it refuseth to submit to the faith. It even puts on new armour to attack it, after it hath invented new methods of self-defence. Under pretence that natural science hath made greater progress, revelation is despised. Under pretence that modern notions of God the Creator are purer than those of the ancients, the yoke of God the Redeemer is broken off. We are going to employ the remaining part of this discourse in justifying the proposition of St. Paul, in the sense that we have given it: we are going to endeavour to prove, that revealed religion hath advantages infinitely superior to natural religion: that the greatest geniuses are incapable of discovering by their own reason all the truths necessary to salvation: and that it displays the goodness of God, not to abandon us to the uncertainties of our own wisdom, but to make us the rich present of revelation.

We will enter into this discussion, by placing on the one side a philosopher contemplating the works of nature: on the other, a disciple of Jesus Christ receiving the doctrines of revelation. To each we will give four subjects to examine: the attributes of God: the nature of man: the means of appeasing the remorse of conscience: and a future state. From their judgments on each of these subjects, evidence will arise of the superior worth of that revelation, which some minute philosophers affect to despise, and above which they prefer that rough draught, which they sketch out by their own learned speculations.

1. Let us consider a disciple of natural religion, and a disciple of revealed religion, meditating on the attributes of God. When the disciple of natural religion considers the symmetry of this universe; when he observes that admirable uniformity, which appears in the succession of seasons, and in the constant rotation of night and day; when he remarks the exact motions of the heavenly bodies; the flux and reflux of the sea, so ordered that billows, which
swell

swell into mountains, and seem to threaten the world with an universal deluge, break away on the shore, and respect on the beach the command of the Creator, who said to the sea, "hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther;" and here shall thy proud waves be stayed:" when he attends to all these marvellous works, he will readily conclude, that the Author of nature is a being powerful and wise. But when he observes winds, tempests, and earthquakes, which seem to threaten the reduction of nature to its primitive chaos; when he sees the sea overflow its banks, and burst the enormous moles, that the industry of mankind had raised; his speculations will be perplexed, he will imagine, he sees characters of infirmity among so many proofs of creative perfection and power.

When he thinks, that God, having enriched the habitable world with innumerable productions of infinite worth to the inhabitant, hath placed man here as a sovereign in a superb palace; when he considers how admirably God hath proportioned the divers parts of the creation to the construction of the human body, the air to the lungs, aliments to the different humours of the body, the medium, by which objects are rendered visible, to the eyes, that, by which sounds are communicated, to the ears; when he remarks how God hath connected man with his own species, and not with animals of another kind; how he hath distributed talents, so that some requiring the assistance of others, all should be mutually united together; how he hath bound men together by invisible ties, so that one cannot see another in pain without a sympathy, that inclines him to relieve him: when the disciple of natural religion meditates on these grand subjects, he concludes that the Author of nature is a beneficent being. But, when he sees the innumerable miseries to which men are subject; when he finds, that every creature, which contributes to support, contributes at the same time to destroy us; when he thinks, that the air, which assists respiration, conveys epidemical diseases, and imperceptible poisons; that aliments, which nourish us, are often our bane; that the animals, that serve us, often turn savage against us; when he observes the perfidiousness of society, the mutual industry of mankind in tormenting each other; the arts, which they invent to deprive one another of life; when he attempts to reckon up the innumerable

maladies, that consume us; when he considers death, which bows the loftiest heads, dissolves the firmest cements, and subverts the best-founded fortunes; when he makes these reflections, he will be apt to doubt, whether it be goodness, or the contrary attribute, that inclineth the Author of our being to give us existence. When the disciple of natural religion reads those reverses of fortune, of which history furnisheth a great many examples; when he seeth tyrants fall from a pinnacle of grandeur; wicked men often punished by their own wickedness, the avaricious punished by the objects of their avarice, the ambitious by those of their ambition, the voluptuous by those of their voluptuousness: when he perceives that the laws of virtue are so essential to public happiness, that without them society would become a banditti, at least, that society is more or less happy, or miserable, according to its looser or closer attachment to virtue; when he considers all these cases, he will probably conclude, that the Author of this universe is a just and holy being. But, when he sees tyranny established, vice enthroned, humility in confusion, pride wearing a crown, and love to holiness sometimes exposing people to many and intolerable calamities; he will not be able to justify God, amidst the darkness in which his equity is involved in the government of the world.

But, of all these mysteries, can one be proposed, which the Gospel doth not unfold; or, at least, is there one, on which it doth not give us some principles, that are sufficient to conciliate it with the perfections of the Creator, how opposite soever it may seem?

Do the disorders of the world puzzle the disciple of natural religion, and produce difficulties in his mind? With the principles of the Gospel I can solve them all. When it is remembered, that this world hath been defiled by the sin of man, and that he is, therefore, an object of divine displeasure; when the principle is admitted, that the world is not now what it was, when it came out of the hands of God; and that in comparison with its pristine state, it is only a heap of ruins, the truly magnificent, but actually ruinous heap of an edifice of incomparable beauty, the rubbish of which is far more proper to excite our grief for the loss of its primitive grandeur, than to suit our present wants. When these reflections are made,

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can we find any objections, in the disorders of the world, against the wisdom of our Creator?

Are the miseries of man, and is the fatal necessity of death, in contemplation? With the principles of the Gospel, I solve the difficulties, which these sad objects produce in the mind of the disciple of natural religion. If the principles of Christianity be admitted, if we allow, that the afflictions of good men are profitable to them, and that, in many cases, prosperity would be fatal to them; if we grant, that the present is a transitory state, and that this momentary life will be succeeded by an immortal state; if we recollect the many similar truths, which the Gospel abundantly declares; can we find, in human miseries, and in the necessity of dying, objections against the goodness of the Creator?

Do the prosperities of bad men, and adversities of the good, confuse our ideas of God? With the principles of the Gospel, I can remove all the difficulties, which these different conditions produce in the mind of the disciple of natural religion. If the principles of the Gospel be admitted, if we be persuaded, that the tyrant, whose prosperity astonisheth us, fulfils the counsel of God; if ecclesiastical history assure us, that Herods, and Pilates, themselves contributed to the establishment of that very Christianity, which they meant to destroy; especially, if we admit a state of future rewards and punishments; can the obscurity, in which providence hath been pleased to wrap up some of its designs, raise doubts about the justice of the Creator?

In regard, then, to the first object of contemplation, the perfection of the nature of God, revealed religion is infinitely superior to natural religion; the disciple of the first religion is infinitely wiser than the pupil of the last.

II. Let us consider these two disciples examining the nature of man, and endeavouring to know themselves. The disciple of natural religion cannot know mankind; he cannot perfectly understand the nature, the obligations, the duration of man.

1. The disciple of natural religion can only imperfectly know the nature of man, the difference of the two substances, of which he is composed. His reason, indeed, may speculate the matter, and he may perceive that there is no relation between motion and thought, between the dissolution of a few fibres and violent sensations of pain, between an agitation of humours and pro-

found reflections; he may infer from two different effects, that there ought to be two different causes, a cause of motion, and a cause of sensation, a cause of agitating humours, and a cause of reflecting, that there is body, and that there is spirit.

But, in my opinion, those philosophers who are best acquainted with the nature of man, cannot account for two difficulties, that are proposed to them, when, on the mere principles of reason, they affirm, that man is composed of the two substances of matter and mind. I ask, first, Do ye so well understand matter, are your ideas of it so complete, that ye can affirm, for certain, it is susceptible of nothing more than this, or that? Are ye sure that it implies a contradiction to affirm, it hath one property, which hath escaped your observation? And, consequently, can ye actually demonstrate, that the essence of matter is incompatible with thought? Since, when ye cannot discover the union of an attribute with a subject, ye instantly conclude, that two attributes, which seem to you to have no relation, suppose two different subjects: and since ye conclude that extent and thought compose two different subjects, body and soul, because ye can discover no natural relation between extent and thought; if I discover a third attribute, which appears to me entirely unconnected with both extent and thought, I shall have a right, in my turn, to admit three subjects in man; matter, which is the subject of extent; mind, which is the subject of thought; and a third subject, which belongs to the attribute, that seems to me to have no relation to either matter or mind. Now I do know such an attribute; but I do not know to which of your two subjects I ought to refer it: I mean sensation. I find it in my nature, and I experience it every hour. But I am altogether at a loss, whether I ought to attribute it to body, or to spirit. I perceive no more natural and necessary relation between sensation and motion, than between sensation and thought.

There are, then, on your principle, three substances in man, one the substratum, which is the subject of extension; another, which is the subject of thought; and a third, which is the subject of sensation: or rather, I suspect, there is only one substance in man, which is known to me very imperfectly, to which all these attributes belong, and which are united together, although I am not able to discover their relation.

Revealed religion removes these difficulties, and decides the question. It tells us, that there are two beings in man, and, if I may express myself so, two different men, the material man, and the immaterial man. The Scriptures speak, on these principles, thus; "The dust shall return to the earth as it was," this is the material man: "The spirit shall return to God who gave it," this is the immaterial man. "Fear not them which kill the body," that is to say, the material man: "fear him, which is able to destroy the soul," that is, the immaterial man. "We are willing to be absent from the body," that is from the material man: "and to be present with the Lord," that is to say, to have the immaterial man disembodied. "They stoned Stephen," that is, the material man: "calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," that is to say, receive the immaterial man.

2. The disciple of natural religion can obtain only an imperfect knowledge of the obligations, or duties of man. Natural religion may indeed conduct him to a certain point, and tell him, that he ought to love his benefactor, and various similar maxims. But is natural religion, think ye, sufficient to account for that contrariety, of which every man is conscious, that opposition between inclination and obligation? A very solid argument, I grant, in favour of moral rectitude ariseth from observing, that, to whatever degree a man may carry his sin, whatever efforts he may make to eradicate those seeds of virtue from his heart, which nature has sown there, he cannot forbear venerating virtue, and recoiling at vice. This is certainly a proof, that the Author of our being meant to forbid vice, and to enjoin virtue. But is there no room for complaint? Is there nothing specious in the following objection? As, in spite of all my endeavours to destroy virtuous dispositions, I cannot help respecting virtue, ye infer, that the Author of my being intended I should be virtuous: so, as, in spite of all my endeavours to eradicate vice, I cannot help loving vice, have I not reason for inferring, in my turn, that, the Author of my being designed I should be vicious; or, at least, that he cannot justly impute guilt to me for performing those actions, which proceed from some principles, that were born with me? Is there no show of reason in this famous sophism? Reconcile the God of nature with the God of religion. Explain how the

God of religion can forbid what the God of nature inspires; and how he, who follows those dictates, which the God of nature inspires, can be punished for so doing by the God of religion.

The Gospel unfolds this mystery. It attributes this seed of corruption to the depravity of nature. It attributeth the respect, that we feel for virtue, to the remains of the image of God, in which we were formed, and which can never be entirely effaced. Because we were born in sin, the Gospel concludes, that we ought to apply all our attentive endeavours to eradicate the seeds of corruption. And, because the image of the Creator is partly erased from our hearts, the Gospel concludes, that we ought to give ourselves wholly to the retracing of it, and so to answer the excellence of our extraction.

3. A disciple of natural religion can obtain only an imperfect knowledge of the duration of man, whether his soul be immortal, or whether it be involved in the ruin of matter. Reason, I allow, advanceth some solid arguments in proof of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. For what necessity is there for supposing, that the soul, which is a spiritual, indivisible, and immaterial being, that constitutes a whole, and is a distinct being, although united to a portion of matter, should cease to exist, when its union with the body is dissolved? A positive act of the Creator is necessary to the annihilation of a substance. The annihilating of a being, that subsists, requireth an act of power similar to that which gave it existence at first. Now, far from having any ground to believe, that God will cause his power to intervene to annihilate our souls, every thing, that we know, persuadeth us, that he himself hath engraven characters of immortality on them, and that he will preserve them for ever. Enter into thy heart, frail creature! see, feel, consider those grand ideas, those immortal designs, that thirst for existing, which a thousand ages cannot quench, and in these lines and points behold the finger of thy Creator writing a promise of immortality to thee. But, how solid soever these arguments may be, however evident in themselves, and striking to a philosopher, they are objectionable, because they are not popular, but above vulgar minds, to whom the bare terms, spirituality and existence, are entirely barbarous, and convey no meaning at all.

Moreover,

Moreover, the union between the operations of the soul, and those of the body, is so close, that all the philosophers in the world cannot certainly determine, whether, the operations of the body ceasing, the operations of the soul do not cease with them. I see a body in perfect health, the mind, therefore, is sound. The same body is disordered, and the mind is disconcerted with it. The brain is filled, and the soul is instantly confused. The brisker the circulation of the blood is, the quicker the ideas of the mind are, and the more extensive its knowledge. At length death comes, and dissolves all the parts of the body; and how difficult is it to persuade one's self, that the soul, which was affected with every former motion of the body, will not be dissipated by its entire dissolution!

Are they the vulgar only, to whom philosophical arguments for the immortality of the soul appear deficient in evidence? Do not superior geniuses require, at least, an explanation of what rank ye assign to beasts, on the principle, that nothing capable of ideas and conceptions, can be involved in a dissolution of matter? Nobody would venture to affirm now, in an assembly of philosophers, what was some time ago maintained with great warmth, that beasts are mere self-moving machines. Experience seems to demonstrate the falsity of the metaphysical reasonings, that have been proposed in favour of this opinion; and we cannot observe the actions of beasts, without being inclined to infer one of these two consequences: either the spirit of man is mortal, like his body; or the souls of beasts are immortal, like those of mankind.

Revelation dissipates all our obscurities, and teacheth us clearly, and without a may-be, that God willeth our immortality. It carries our thoughts forward to a future state, as to a fixed period, whither the greatest part of the promises of God tend. It commandeth us, indeed, to consider all the blessings of this life, the aliments, that nourish us, the rays, which enlighten us, the air, that we breathe, sceptres, crowns, and kingdoms, as effects of the liberality of God, and as grounds of our gratitude. But, at the same time, it requireth us to surmount the most magnificent earthly objects. It commandeth us to consider light, air, and aliments, crowns, sceptres, and kingdoms, as unfit to constitute the felicity of a soul created

in the image of the blessed God, and with whom the blessed God hath formed a close and intimate union. It assureth us, that an age of life cannot fill the wish of duration, which it is the noble prerogative of an immortal soul to form. It doth not ground the doctrine of immortality on metaphysical speculations, nor on complex arguments, uninvestigable by the greatest part of mankind, and which always leave some doubts in the minds of the ablest philosophers. The Gospel grounds the doctrine on the only principle that can support the weight, with which it is encumbered. The principle, which I mean, is the will of the Creator, who, having created our souls at first by an act of his will, can either eternally preserve them, or absolutely annihilate them, whether they be material, or spiritual, mortal, or immortal, by nature. Thus the disciple of revealed religion doth not float between doubt and assurance, hope and fear, as the disciple of nature doth. He is not obliged to leave the most interesting question, that poor mortals can agitate, undecided; whether their souls perish with their bodies, or survive their ruins. He does not say, as Cyrus said to his children; I know not how to persuade myself, that the soul lives in this mortal body, and ceaseth to be, when the body expires. I am more inclined to think, that it requires after death more penetration and purity. He doth not say, as Socrates said to his judges; And now we are going, I to suffer death, and ye to enjoy life. God only knows which is the best. He doth not say as Cicero said, speaking on this important article; I do not pretend to say, that what I affirm is as infallible as the Pythian oracle, I speak only by conjecture. The disciple of revelation, authorized by the testimony of Jesus Christ, "who hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel;" boldly affirms, "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. We, that are in this tabernacle, do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that, which I have committed unto him, against that day."

III. We are next to consider the disciple of natural religion, and the disciple of revealed religion, at the tribunal of God

as penitents soliciting for pardon. The former cannot find, even by feeling after it, in natural religion, according to the language of St. Paul, the grand mean of reconciliation, which God hath given to the church; I mean the sacrifice of the cross. Reason, indeed, discovers, that man is guilty, as the confessions, and acknowledgments, which the Heathens made of their crimes, prove. It discerns, that a sinner deserves punishment, as the remorse and fear, with which their consciences were often excruciated, demonstrate. It presumes, indeed, that God will yield to the entreaties of his creatures, as their prayers, and temples, and altars testify. It even goes so far as to perceive the necessity of satisfying divine justice, this their sacrifices, this their burnt-offerings, this their human victims, this the rivers of blood, that flowed on their altars, shew.

But, how likely soever all these speculations may be, they form only a systematic body without a head; for no positive promise of pardon from God himself belongs to them. The mystery of the cross is entirely invisible; for only God could reveal that, because only God could plan; and only he could execute that profound relief. How could human reason, alone, and unassisted, have discovered the mystery of redemption, when, alas! after an infallible God hath revealed it, reason is absorbed in its depth, and needs all its submission to receive it, as an article of faith?

But that, which natural religion cannot attain, revealed religion clearly discovers. Revelation exhibits a God-Man, dying for the sins of mankind, and setting grace before every penitent sinner: grace for all mankind. The schools have often agitated the questions, and sometimes very indifferently, Whether Jesus Christ died for all mankind, or only for a small number? Whether his blood were shed for all, who hear the gospel, or for those only, who believe it? We will not dispute these points now: but we will venture to affirm, that there is not an individual of all our hearers, who hath not a right to say to himself, If I believe, I shall be saved; I shall believe, if I endeavour to believe. Consequently, every individual hath a right to apply the benefits of the death of Christ to himself. The gospel reveals grace, that pardons the most atrocious crimes, those that have the most fatal influences. Although ye have denied Christ with Peter, betrayed him with Judas, per-

secuted him with Saul; yet the blood of a God-Man is sufficient to obtain your pardon, if ye be in the covenant of redemption. Grace which is accessible at all times, at every instant of life. Woe be to you, my brethren; woe be to you, if, abusing this reflection, ye delay your return to God till the last moments of your lives, when your repentance will be difficult, not to say impracticable and impossible! But it is always certain, that God every instant opens the treasures of his mercy, when sinners return to him by sincere repentance. Grace, capable of terminating all the melancholy thoughts, that are produced by the fear of being abandoned by God in the midst of our race, and of having the work of salvation left imperfect. For, after he hath given us a present so magnificent, what can he refuse? "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Grace, so clearly revealed in our Scriptures, that the most accurate reasoning, hereby the most extravagant, and infidelity the most obstinate, cannot enervate his declarations. For, the death of Christ may be considered in different views: it is a sufficient confirmation of his doctrine; it is a perfect pattern of patience, it is the most magnanimous degree of extraordinary excellencies, that can be imagined: but the gospel very seldom presents it to us in any of these views, it leaves them to our own perception; but when it speaks of his death, it usually speaks of it as an expiatory sacrifice. Need we repeat here a number of formal texts, and express decisions on this matter? Thanks be to God, we are preaching to a Christian auditory, who make the death of the Redeemer the foundation of faith! The gospel, then, assureth the penitent sinner of pardon. Zeno, Epicurus, Pythagoras, Socrates, Porch, Academy, Lyceum, what have ye to offer to your disciples, equal to this promise of the gospel?

IV. But that, which principally displays the prerogatives of the Christian above those of the philosopher, is an all-sufficient provision against the fear of death. A comparison between a dying Pagan and a dying Christian will shew this. I consider a Pagan, in his dying-bed, speaking to himself what follows. On which side soever I consider my state, I perceive nothing but trouble and despair. If I observe the fore-runners of death, I see aw-

ful symptoms, violent sickness, and intolerable pain, which surround my sick-bed, and are the first scenes of the bloody tragedy. As to the world, my dearest objects disappear; my closest connections are dissolving; my most specious titles are effacing; my noblest privileges are vanishing away; a dismal curtain falls between my eyes and all the decorations of the universe. In regard to my body, it is a mass without motion, and life: my tongue is about to be condemned to eternal silence; my eyes to perpetual darkness; all the organs of my body to entire dissolution; and the miserable remains of my carcase to lodge in the grave, and to become food for the worms. If I consider my soul, I scarcely know whether it be immortal; and could I demonstrate its natural immortality, I should not be able to say, whether my Creator would display his attributes in preserving, or in destroying it; whether my wishes for immortality be the dictates of nature, or the language of sin. If I consider my past life, I have a witness within me, attesting that my practice hath been less than my knowledge, how small soever the latter hath been; and that the abundant depravity of my heart hath thickened the darkness of my mind. If I consider futurity, I think I discover thro' many thick clouds a future state; my reason suggests, that the Author of nature hath not given me a soul so sublime in thought, and so expansive in desire, merely to move in this little orb for a moment: but this is nothing but conjecture; and, if there be another œconomy after this, should I be less miserable than I am here? One moment I hope for annihilation, the next I shudder with the fear of being annihilated; my thoughts and desires are at war with each other, they rise, they resist, they destroy one another. Such is the dying Heathen. If a few examples of those, who have died otherwise, be adduced, they ought not to be urged in evidence against what we have advanced; for they are rare, and very probably deceptive, their outward tranquillity being only a concealment of trouble within. Trouble is the greater for confinement within, and for an affected appearance without. As we ought not to believe, that philosophy hath rendered men insensible of pain, because some philosophers have maintained that pain is no evil, and have seemed to triumph over it: so neither ought we to believe, that it hath

disarmed death in regard to the disciples of natural religion, because some have affirmed, that death is not an object of fear. After all, if some Pagans enjoyed a real tranquillity at death, it was a groundless tranquillity, to which reason contributed nothing at all.

O! how differently do Christians die! How doth revealed religion triumph over the religion of nature in this respect! May each of our hearers be a new evidence of this article! The whole, that troubles an expiring Heathen, revives a Christian in his dying bed.

Thus speaks the dying Christian. When I consider the awful symptoms of death, and the violent agonies of dissolving nature, they appear to me as medical preparations, sharp, but salutary; they are necessary to detach me from life, and to separate the remains of inward depravity from me. Beside, I shall not be abandoned to my own frailty; but my patience and constancy will be proportional to my sufferings, and that powerful arm, which hath supported me through life, will uphold me under the pressure of death. If I consider my sins, many as they are, I am invulnerable; for I go to a tribunal of mercy, where God is reconciled, and justice is satisfied. If I consider my body, I perceive, I am putting off a mean and corruptible habit, and putting on robes of glory. Fall, fall ye imperfect senses, ye frail organs, fall ye imperfect senses, ye frail organs, fall ye house of clay into your original dust; ye will be "sown in corruption, but raised in corruption; sown in dishonour, but raised in glory; sown in weakness, but raised in power." If I consider my soul, it is passing, I see, from slavery to freedom. I shall carry with me that, which thinks and reflects. I shall carry with me the delicacy of taste, the harmony of sounds, the beauty of colours, the fragrance of odorous smells. I shall surmount heaven and earth, nature and all terrestrial things, and my ideas of all their beauties will multiply and expand. If I consider the future œconomy, to which I go, I have, I own, very inadequate notions of it; but my incapacity is the ground of my expectation. Could I perfectly comprehend it, it would argue its resemblance to some of the present objects of my senses, or its minute proportion to the present operations of my mind. If worldly dignities and grandeurs, if accumulated treasures, if the enjoyments of the most refined voluptuousness, were to represent

represent to me celestial felicity, I should suppose, that, partaking of their nature, they partook of their vanity. But, if nothing here can represent the future state, it is because that state surpasseth every other. My ardour is increased by my imperfect knowledge of it: My knowledge, and virtue, I know, will be perfected; I know I shall comprehend truth, and obey order; I know, I shall be free from all evils, and in possession of all good; I shall be present with God, I know, and with all the happy spirits, who surround his throne; and this perfect state, I am sure, will continue for ever and ever.

Such are the all-sufficient supports, which revealed religion affords against the fear of death. Such are the meditations of a dying Christian; not of one, whose whole Christianity consists of dry speculations, which have no influence over his practice: but of one, who applies his knowledge to relieve the real wants of his life.

Christianity, then, we have seen, is superior to natural religion, in these four respects. To these we will add a few more reflections in farther evidence of the superiority of revealed religion to the religion of nature.

1. The ideas of the ancient philosophers concerning natural religion were not collected into a body of doctrine. One philosopher had one idea, another studious man had another idea; ideas of truth and virtue, therefore, lay dispersed. Who doth not see the pre-eminence of revelation, on this article? No human capacity either hath been, or would ever have been equal to the noble conception of a perfect body of truth. There is no genius so narrow, as not to be capable of proposing some clear truth, some excellent maxim: but to lay down principles, and to perceive at once a chain of consequences, these are the efforts of great geniuses; this capability is philosophical perfection. If this axiom be incontestible, what a fountain of wisdom does the system of Christianity argue! It represents us, in one lovely body, of perfect symmetry, all the ideas, that we have enumerated. One idea supposeth another idea; and the whole is united in a manner so compact, that it is impossible to alter one particle without defacing the beauty of all.

2. Pagan philosophers never had a system of natural religion comparable with that of modern philosophers, although the latter glory in their contempt of revela-

tion. Modern philosophers have derived the clearest and best parts of their systems from the very revelation, which they affect to despise. We grant, the doctrines of the perfections of God, of providence, and of a future state, are perfectly conformable to the light of reason. A man, who should pursue rational tracks of knowledge to his utmost power, would discover, we own, all these doctrines: but it is one thing to grant, that these doctrines are conformable to reason; and it is another to affirm, that reason actually discovered them. It is one thing to allow, that a man, who should pursue rational tracks of knowledge to his utmost power, would discover all these doctrines: and it is another to pretend, that any man hath pursued these tracks to the utmost, and hath actually discovered them. It was the gospel that taught mankind the use of their reason. It was the gospel, that assisted men to form a body of natural religion. Modern philosophers avail themselves of these aids; they form a body of natural religion by the light of the gospel, and then they attribute to their own penetration what they derive from foreign aid.

3. What was most rational in the natural religion of the Pagan philosophers was mixed with fancies and dreams. There was not a single philosopher, who did not adopt some absurdity, and communicate it to his disciples. One taught, that every being was animated with a particular soul, and on this absurd hypothesis he pretended to account for all the phenomena of nature. Another took every star for a god, and thought the soul a vapour, that passed from one body to another, expiating in the body of a beast the sins that were committed in that of a man. One attributed the creation of the world to a blind chance, and the government of all events in it to an inviolable fate. Another affirmed the eternity of the world, and said, there was no period in eternity, in which heaven and earth, nature and elements, were not visible. One said, every thing is uncertain; we are not sure of our own existence; the distinction between just and unjust, virtue and vice, is fanciful, and hath no real foundation in the nature of things. Another made matter equal to God; and maintained, that it concurred with the supreme Being in the formation of the universe. One took the world for a prodigious body, of which he thought God was the soul. Another affirmed the materiality of the soul, and attributed

tributed to matter the faculties of thinking and reasoning. Some denied the immortality of the soul, and the intervention of providence; and pretended, that an infinite number of particles of matter, indivisible, and indestructible, revolved in the universe; that from their fortuitous concourse arose the present world; that in all this there was no design; that the feet were not formed for walking, the eyes for seeing, nor the hands for handling. The gospel is light without darkness. It hath nothing mean; nothing false; nothing that doth not bear the characters of that wisdom, from which it proceeds.

4. What was pure in the natural religion of the Heathens was not known, nor could be known to any but philosophers. The common people were incapable of that penetration and labour, which the investigating of truth, and the distinguishing of it from that falsehood, in which passion and prejudice had enveloped it, required. A mediocrity of genius, I allow, is sufficient for the purpose of inferring a part of those consequences from the works of nature, of which we form the body of natural religion: but none, but geniuses of the first order, are capable of kenning those distant consequences, which are in-folded in darkness. The bulk of mankind wanted a short way proportional to every mind. They wanted an authority, the infallibility of which all mankind might easily see. They wanted a revelation founded on evidence plain and obvious to all the world. Philosophers could not shew the world such a short way: but revelation hath shewed it. No philosopher could assume the authority, necessary to establish such a way: it became God alone to dictate in such a manner, and in revelation he hath done it. *Saurin.*

§ 190. *The Gospel superior to the writings of the Heathens in oratory.*

Objection to the Holy Scriptures. If Christ were the Son of God, and his apostles inspired by the Holy Ghost, and the Scriptures were God's Word, they would excel all other men and writings in all true rational worth and excellency; whereas Aristotle excelleth them in logic and philosophy, and Cicero and Demosthenes in oratory, and Seneca in ingenious expressions of morality, &c.

Answer. You may as well argue, that Aristotle was no wiser than a minstrel, be-

cause he could not fiddle so well; or than a painter, because he could not limn so well; or than a harlot, because he could not dress himself so neatly. Means are to be estimated according to their fitness for their ends. Christ himself excelled all mankind, in all true perfections; and yet it became him not to exercise all men's arts, to shew that he excelleth them. He came not into the world to teach men architecture, navigation, medicine, astronomy, grammar, music, logic, rhetoric, &c. and therefore shewed not his skill in these. The world had sufficient helps and means for these in nature. It was to save men from sin and hell, and bring them to pardon, holiness, and heaven, that Christ was incarnate, and that the apostles were inspired, and the Scriptures written: and to be fitted to these ends, is the excellency to be expected in them: and in this they excel all persons and writings in the world. As God doth not syllogize or know by our imperfect way of ratiocination, but yet knoweth all things better than syllogizers do; so Christ hath a more high and excellent kind of logic and oratory, and a more apt and spiritual and powerful style, than Aristotle, Demosthenes, Cicero, or Seneca. He shewed not that skill in methodical healing, which Hypocrates and Galen shewed: but he shewed more and better skill, when he could heal with a word, and raise the dead, and had the power of life and death; so did he bring more convincing evidence than Aristotle, and persuaded more powerfully than Demosthenes or Cicero. And though this kind of formal learning was below him, and below the inspired messengers of his Gospel, yet his inferior servants (an Aquinas, a Scotus, an Ockam, a Scaliger, a Ramus, a Gassendus) do match or excel the old philosophers, and abundance of Christians equalize or excel a Demosthenes or Cicero, in the truest oratory. *Baxter.*

§ 191. *Obscurities in the Scriptures no proof of their not being genuine.*

That there are obscurities and difficulties in Holy Writ is acknowledged by all persons that are conversant in the Sacred Volume. And truly, if we consider things aright, we shall find, this is not unworthy either of God or of his Holy Word. Not of God himself, who indited the sacred Scriptures; for he hath most wisely ordered, that there should be some things ob-

scure and mysterious in them, to create a becoming reverence, and to let us know, that these writings are not penned after an ordinary manner. These clouds and darkness are suitable to the majesty of heaven; they are proper to beget in us humility, and mean thoughts of ourselves, to convince us of the shallowness of our intellects, to shew us how short-sighted we are, to give check to our presumption, to quash our towering conceits of our knowledge, to supersede our vain boasting, to repel our vaunting pride and insolence. They are serviceable also to rebuke our sloth and negligence, to provoke our care and study, and to excite our utmost diligence. Thus it hath pleased God to exercise the understandings of men, and to make trial of their industry by these difficult passages which occur in Scripture. If all places were easy, this book would be liable to contempt, and there would be no room left for our diligent search and enquiry. But now at every reading of it we still find something to employ our understandings afresh, and to improve our most inquisitive faculties. Here our minds may be perpetually busied; here is enough to entertain our greatest leisure and most earnest study. Here are many mysteries to be unfolded, many depths to be fathomed, many abstrusities, both in the things and in the words that convey the notice of them to our minds, to be discovered: so that to the greatest studious and most ambitious enquirer, that will happen which the Son of Sirach saith in another case, "When a man hath done, then he beginneth." Here are not only fords and shallows which we may easily wade through, but here are unpassable depths and abysses. It hath seemed good to the wise Governor of the world, that there should be in the Holy Scripture some things hard to be understood, that hereby the excellency of these sacred writings might appear, and that by this means it might be seen of what universal use they are: for those places which are plain and clear are fitted to ordinary capacities, and those other portions which are deep and intricate are the proper entertainment of the learned; and thus the whole book is calculated for the general benefit of all. St. Chrysostom hath summed it up thus very briefly: All passages in Scripture are not plain and perspicuous, lest we should be lazy; nor are all obscure, lest we should despond. This excellent tem-

pering of the sacred writ is a high commendation of it, and is no other than the wise contrivance of Heaven.

And as this obscurity of some parts of Scripture is not unworthy of God himself, so neither is it any disparagement to his sacred word. For we must know, that this difficulty happens from the very nature of the things themselves, which are here recorded. It cannot be otherwise but that some portions of Scripture must be dark and obscure, and consequently must labour under different and contrary expositions, because they were written so long ago, and contain in them so many old customs and usages, so many relations concerning different people, so many and various idioms of tongues, such diversity of ancient expressions, laws, and manners of all nations in the world. It is unreasonable to expect that we should exactly understand all these. It is not to be wondered at, that these occasion doubts, difficulties, mistakes. And it is certain, that the being ignorant of some of these, is no blemish, either to the sacred writings, or to the persons who read and study them. Suppose I do not know what the house of Asupim is, 1 Chron. xxvi. 15. or what kind of trees the Almug or Algum trees are, 1 Kings x. 12. 1 Chron. xx. 8. or who are meant by the Gammadim, Ezek. xxvii. 11. What though I am not so well skilled in the Jewish modes and fashions, as to tell what kind of women's ornament the houses of the soul are, in Is. iii. 20. or what particular idols or Pagan deities Gad and Meni are, Is. lvi. 11. or which of the Heathen gods is meant by Chiun or Remphan, Amos v. 26. Acts vii. 43. Some of the most learned expositors and critics have confessed their ignorance as to these places of scripture; particularly upon the last of them our profound antiquary, Selden, hath these despairing words: For my part I perceive my blindness to be such, that I can see nothing at all! And to the same purpose this admirable person speaks concerning several other passages in Scripture, as of Nishroc, Nergal, and other idols mentioned there, the origin and meaning of which names are hid from us. Many other reasons might be alledged of the real or seeming difficulty of some places, namely, the sublimity of the matter, the ambiguity and different significations of the words, the inadvertency of expositors, and sometimes their unskilfulness, and oftentimes their wilful

willful designing to pervert the words, in order to the maintaining some opinions or practices which they adhere to. But no man of a sedate mind and reason can think, that the Scriptures themselves are disparaged by these difficulties and mistakes; for they are not arguments of the Scripture's imperfection, but of man's. Besides, these obscurities, which are accompanied with the various ways of rendering some expressions, and determining the sense, are no proof of the imperfection of this holy book, because in matters of faith and manners, which are the main things we are concerned in, and for which the Bible was chiefly writ, these writings are plain and intelligible. All necessary and fundamental points of religion are set down here in such expressions as are suitable to the capacities of the most simple and vulgar. God hath graciously condescended to the infirmities of the meanest and most unlearned by speaking to them in these writings after the manner of men, and by propounding the greatest mysteries in a familiar style and way. The Scripture, so far as it relates to our belief and practice, is very easy and plain, yea, much plainer than the glosses and comments upon it oftentimes are. In a word, most of the places of Scripture call not for an interpreter, but a practitioner. As for other passages, which are obscure and intricate, but which are very few in respect of those that are plain, they were designed, as hath been already suggested, to employ our more inquisitive and elaborate thoughts, and to whet our industry in the studying of this holy volume; that at last, when we have the happiness of retrieving the lost sense of the words, and restoring them to their genuine meaning, we may the more prize our acquiescence which hath cost us some pains. Or, if after all our attempts we cannot reach the true meaning, we have reason to entertain reverend thoughts of those difficult texts of Scripture, and to persuade ourselves, that they are worthy of the divine Enditer, though our weak minds cannot comprehend them. If human authors delight to darken their writings sometimes, and it is accounted no blemish, surely we may conclude, that the mysteries of the sacred and inspired style are rather an enhancement than a diminution of its excellency. Shall we not think it fit to deal as fairly with the sacred code, as Socrates did with Heraclitus' writings, that is, not only

pronounce so much as we understand of them to be excellent and admirable, but believe also, that what we do not understand is so too? It is certainly an undeniable truth, that neither the wisdom of God, nor the credit of this inspired book, are impaired by any difficulties we find in it.

Edwards.

§ 192. *The Bible superior to all other books.*

In what other writings can we descry those excellencies which we find in the Bible? None of them can equal it in antiquity; for the first penman of the Sacred Scripture hath the start of all philosophers, poets, and historians, and is absolutely the ancientest writer extant in the word. No writings are equal to these of the Bible; if we mention only the stock of human learning contained in them. Here linguists and philologists may find that which is to be found no where else. Here rhetoricians and orators may be entertained with a more lofty eloquence, with a choicer composure of words, and with a greater variety of style, than any other writers can afford them. Here is a book, where more is understood than expressed, where words are few, but the sense is full and redundant. No books equal this in authority, because it is the Word of God himself, and dictated by an unerring Spirit. It excels all other writings in the excellency of its matter, which is the highest, noblest, and worthiest, and of the greatest concern to mankind. Lastly, the Scriptures transcend all other writings in their power and efficacy.—

Wherefore, with great seriousness and importunity, I request the reader that he would entertain such thoughts and persuasions as these, that Bible-learning is the highest accomplishment, that this book is the most valuable of any upon earth, that here is a library in one single volume, that this alone is sufficient for us, though all the libraries in the world were destroyed.

Ibid.

§ 193. *All the religious knowledge in the world derived from Revelation.*

Deism, or the principles of natural worship, are only the faint remnants or dying flames of revealed religion in the posterity of Noah; and our modern philosophers, nay, and some of our philosophising divines, have too much exalted the faculties of our souls, when they have maintained that by their force, mankind has been able to find out.

out that there is one supreme agent or intellectual being which we call God; that praise and prayer are his due worship; and the rest of those deducements, which I am confident are the remote effects of revelation, and unattainable by our discourse, I mean as simply considered, and without the benefit of divine illumination. So that we have not lifted up ourselves to God by the weak pinions of our reason, but he has been pleased to descend to us; and what Socrates said of him, what Plato writ, and the rest of the Heathen philosophers of several nations, is all no more than the twilight of revelation, after the sun of it was set in the race of Noah. That there is something above us, some principle of motion, our reason can apprehend, though it cannot discover what it is by its own virtue. And indeed 'tis very improbable, that we, who by the strength of our faculties cannot enter into the knowledge of any being, not so much as of our own, should be able to find out by them that Supreme Nature, which we cannot otherwise define than by saying it is infinite; as if infinite were definable, or infinity a subject for our narrow understanding. They who would prove religion by reason, do but weaken the cause which they endeavour to support. It is to take away the pillars from our faith, and prop it only with a twig; it is to design a tower like that of Babel, which, if it were possible, as it is not, to reach heaven, would come to nothing by the confusion of the workmen. For every man is building a several way; impotently conceited of his own model, and of his own materials. Reason is always striving, always at a loss; and of necessity it must so come to pass, while it is exercised about that which is not its proper object. Let us be content at last to know God by his own methods; at least so much of him as he is pleased to reveal to us in the Sacred Scriptures. To apprehend them to be the Word of God, is all our reason has to do; for all beyond it is the work of faith, which is the seal of Heaven impressed upon our human understanding.

Dryden.

§ 194. *The weakness of Infidels, with the Unbeliever's Creed.*

The publication of Lord Bolingbroke's posthumous works has given new life and spirit to free-thinking. We seem at present to be endeavouring to unlearn our ca-

techism, with all that we have been taught about religion, in order to model our faith to the fashion of his lordship's system. We have now nothing to do, but to throw away our Bibles, turn the churches into theatres, and rejoice that an act of parliament now in force, gives us an opportunity of getting rid of the clergy by transportation. I was in hopes the extraordinary price of those volumes would have confined their influence to persons of quality. As they are placed above extreme indigence and absolute want of bread, their loose notions would have carried them no farther than cheating at cards, or perhaps plundering their country: but if these opinions spread among the vulgar, we shall be knocked down at noon-day in our streets, and nothing will go forward but robberies and murders.

The instances I have lately seen of free-thinking in the lower part of the world, make me fear, they are going to be as fashionable and as wicked as their betters. I went the other night to the Robin Hood, where it is usual for the advocates against religion to assemble and openly avow their infidelity. One of the questions for the night was—Whether lord Bolingbroke had not done greater services to mankind by his writings, than the Apostles or Evangelists?—As this society is chiefly composed of lawyers' clerks, petty tradesmen, and the lowest mechanics, I was at first surprized at such amazing erudition among them. Toland, Tindal, Collins, Chubb, and Mandeville, they seemed to have got by heart. A shoe-maker harangued his five minutes upon the excellence of the tenets maintained by lord Bolingbroke; but I soon found that his reading had not been extended beyond the idea of a patriot king, which he had mistaken for a glorious system of free-thinking. I could not help smiling at another of the company, who took pains to shew his disbelief of the gospel by unsainting the apostles, and calling them by no other title than plain Paul or plain Peter. The proceedings of this society have indeed almost induced me to wish that (like the Roman Catholics) they were not permitted to read the Bible, rather than that they should read it only to abuse it.

I have frequently heard many wise tradesmen settling the most important articles of our faith over a pint of beer. A baker took occasion from Canning's affair

to maintain, in opposition to the Scriptures, that man might live by bread alone, at least that woman might; for else, said he, how could the girl have been supported for a whole month by a few hard crusts? In answer to this, a barber-surgeon set forth the improbability of that story; and thence inferred, that it was impossible for our Saviour to have fasted forty days in the wilderness. I lately heard a midshipman swear that the Bible was all a lie; for he had sailed round the world with lord Anson, and if there had been any Red Sea he must have met with it. I know a brick-layer, who, while he was working by line and rule, and carefully laying one brick upon another, would argue with a fellow-labourer that the world was made by chance; and a cook, who thought more of his trade, than his Bible, in a dispute concerning the miracles, made a pleasant mistake about the first, and gravely asked his antagonist what he thought of the supper at Cana.

This affectation of free-thinking among the lower class of people, is at present happily confined to the men. On Sundays, while the husbands are toying at the ale-house, the good women, their wives, think it their duty to go to church, say their prayers, bring home the text, and hear the children their catechism. But our polite ladies are, I fear, in their lives and conversations little better than free-thinkers. Going to church, since it is now no longer the fashion to carry on intrigues there, is almost wholly laid aside: and I verily believe, that nothing but another earthquake can fill the churches with people of quality. The fair sex in general are too thoughtless to concern themselves in deep enquiries into matters of religion. It is sufficient that they are taught to believe themselves angels. It would therefore be an ill compliment, while we talk of the heaven they bestow, to persuade them into the Mahometan notion, that they have no souls; though, perhaps, our fine gentlemen may imagine, that by convincing a lady that she has no soul, she will be less scrupulous about the disposal of her body.

The ridiculous notions maintained by free-thinkers in their writings, scarce deserve a serious refutation; and perhaps the best method of answering them would be to select from their works all the absurd and impracticable notions, which they so stiffly maintain in order to evade the belief of the Christian religion. I shall here

throw together a few of their principal tenets, under the contradictory title of

The Unbeliever's Creed.

I believe that there is no God, but that matter is God, and God is matter; and that it is no matter whether there is any God or no.

I believe also, that the world was not made; that the world made itself; that it had no beginning; that it will last for ever, world without end.

I believe that a man is a beast, that the soul is the body, and the body is the soul; and that after death there is neither body nor soul.

I believe that there is no religion; that natural religion is the only religion; and that all religion is unnatural. I believe not in Moses; I believe in the first philosophy; I believe not the Evangelists; I believe in Chubb, Collins, Toland, Tindal, Morgan, Mandeville, Woolston, Hobbes, Shaftesbury; I believe in lord Bolingbroke; I believe not St. Paul.

I believe not revelation; I believe in tradition; I believe in the Talmud; I believe in the Alcoran; I believe not the Bible; I believe in Socrates; I believe in Confucius; I believe in Sanconiatan; I believe in Mahomet; I believe not in Christ.

Lastly, I believe in all unbelief.

Anonymous.

§ 195. *A moral demonstration of the truth of the Christian religion.*

This discourse of all the disputables in the world, shall require the fewest things to be granted; even nothing but what was evident; even nothing but the very subject of the question, viz. That there was such a man as Jesus Christ; that he pretended such things, and taught such doctrines: for he that will prove these things to be from God, must be allowed that they were from something or other.

But this postulate I do not ask for need, but for order's sake and art; for what the histories of that age reported as a public affair, as one of the most eminent transactions of the world, that which made so much noise, which caused so many changes, which occasioned so many wars, which divided so many hearts, which altered so many families, which procured so many deaths, which obtained so many laws in favour, and suffered so many rescripts in the disfavour, of itself; that which was

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not done in a corner, but was thirty-three years and more in acting; which caused so many sects, and was opposed by so much art, and so much power that it might not grow, which filled the world with noise, which effected such great changes in the bodies of men by curing the diseased, and smiting the contumacious or the hypocrites, which drew so many eyes, and filled so many tongues, and employed so many pens, and was the care and the question of the whole world at that time, and immediately after; that which was consigned by public acts and records of courts, which was in the books of friends and enemies, which came accompanied and remarked with eclipses and stars and prodigies of heaven and earth; that which the Jews even in spite and against their wills confessed, and which the witty adversaries intending to overthrow, could never so much as challenge of want of truth in the matter of fact and story; that which they who are infinitely concerned that it should not be believed, or more, that it had never been, do yet only labour to make it appear not to have been divine: certainly, this thing is so certain that it was, that the defenders of it need not account it a kindness to have it presupposed; for never was there any story in the world that had so many degrees of credibility, as the story of the person, life, and death, of Jesus Christ: and if he had not been a true prophet, yet that he was in the world, and said and did such things, cannot be denied; for even concerning Mahomet we make no question but he was in the world, and led a great part of mankind after him, and what was less proved we infinitely believe: and what all men say, and no man denies, and was notorious in itself, of this we may make further inquiries whether it was all that which it pretended; for that it did make pretences and was in the world, needs no more probation.

But now, whether Jesus Christ was sent from God and delivered the will of God, we are to take accounts from all the things of the world which were on him, or about him, or from him.

Bishop Taylor.

§ 196. *Considerations respecting the Person of Jesus Christ.*

I. Consider, first, his person: he was foretold by all the prophets: he, I say, for that appears by the event, and the correspondencies of their sayings to

this person: he was described by infallible characteristics, which did fit him, and did never fit any but him; for, when he was born, then was the fulness of time, and the Messiah was expected at the time when Jesus did appear, which gave occasion to many of the godly then to wait for him, and to hope to live till the time of his revelation: and they did so, and with a spirit of prophecy, which their own nation did confess and honour, glorified God at the revelation: and the most excellent and devout persons that were conspicuous for their piety did then rejoice in him, and confess him; and the expectation of him at that time was so public and famous, that it gave occasion to divers impostors to abuse the credulity of the people, in pretending to be the Messiah; but not only the predictions of the time, and the perfect Synchronisms, did point him out, but at his birth a strange star appeared, which guided certain Levantine princes and sages to the inquiry after him; a strange star, which had an irregular place and an irregular motion, that came by design, and acted by counsel, the counsel of the Almighty Guide, it moved from place to place, till it stood just over the house where the babe did sleep; a star, of which the Heathen knew much, who knew nothing of him; a star, which Calcidius affirmed to have signified the descent of God for the salvation of man; a star, that guided the wise Chaldees to worship him with gifts (as the same disciples of Plato does affirm, and) as the holy Scriptures deliver; and this star could be no secret; it troubled all the country; it put Herod upon strange arts of security for his kingdom; it effected a sad tragedy accidentally, for it occasioned the death of all the little babes in the city, and voisinage of Bethlehem: but the birth of this young child, which was thus glorified by a star, was also signified by an angel, and was effected by the holy Spirit of God, in a manner which was in itself supernatural; a virgin was his mother, and God was his father, and his beginning was miraculous; and this matter of his birth of a virgin was proved to an interested and jealous person, even to Joseph, the supposed father of Jesus; it was affirmed publicly by all his family, and by all his disciples, and published in the midst of all his enemies, who by no artifice could reprove it; a matter so famous, that when it was urged as an argument to prove Jesus to be

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be the Messiah, by the force of a prophecy in Isaiah, "A Virgin shall conceive a Son," they who obstinately refused to admit him, did not deny the matter of fact, but denied that it was so meant by the prophet, which, if it were true, can only prove that Jesus was more excellent than was foretold by the prophets, but that there was nothing less in him than was to be in the Messiah; it was a matter so famous, that the Arabian physicians, who can affirm no such things of their Mahomet, and yet not being able to deny it to be true of the holy Jesus, endeavour to alleviate and lessen the thing, by saying, It is not wholly beyond the force of nature, that a virgin should conceive; so that it was on all hands undeniable, that the mother of Jesus was a virgin, a mother without a man.

This is that Jesus, at whose presence, before he was born, a babe in his mother's belly also did leap for joy, who was also a person extraordinary himself, conceived in his mother's old age, after a long barrenness, signified by an angel in the temple, to his father officiating his priestly office, who was also struck dumb for his not present believing; all the people saw it, and all his kindred were witnesses of his restitution, and he was named by the angel, and his office declared to be the forerunner of the holy Jesus; and this also was foretold by one of the old prophets; for the whole story of this divine person is a chain of providence and wonder, every link of which is a verification of a prophecy, and all of it is that thing which, from Adam to the birth of Jesus, was pointed at and hinted by all the prophets, whose words in him passed perfectly into the event.

This is that Jesus, who, as he was born without a father, so he was learned without a master: he was a man without age, a doctor in a child's garment, disputing in the sanctuary at twelve years old. He was a sojourner in Egypt, because the poor babe, born of an indigent mother, was a formidable rival to a potent King; and this fear could not come from the design of the infant, but must needs arise from the illustriousness of the birth, and the prophecies of the child, and the sayings of the learned, and the journey of the wise men, and the decrees of God: this journey and the return were both managed by the conduct of an angel and a divine dream, for

to the Son of God all the angels did rejoice to minister.

This blessed person, made thus excellent by his Father, and glorious by miraculous conignations, and illustrious by the ministry of heavenly spirits, and proclaimed to Mary and to Joseph by two angels, to the shepherds by a multitude of the heavenly host, to the wise men by a prophecy and by a star, to the Jews by the shepherds, to the Gentiles by the three wise men, to Herod by the doctors of the law, and to himself perfectly known by the inchasing his human nature in the bosom and heart of God, and by the fulness of the Spirit of God, was yet pleased for thirty years together, to live an humble, a laborious, a chaste and a devout, a regular and an even, a wife and an exemplar, a pious and an obscure life, without complaint, without sin, without design of fame, or grandeur of spirit, till the time came that the clefts of the rock were to open, and the diamond give its lustre, and be worn in the diadems of kings, and then this person was wholly admirable; for he was ushered into the world by the voice of a loud crier in the wilderness, a person austere and wise, of a strange life, full of holiness, and full of hardness, and a great preacher of righteousness, a man believed by all the people that he came from God, one who in his own nation gathered disciples publicly, and (which amongst them was a great matter) he was the doctor of a new institution, and baptized all the country; yet this man, so great, so revered, so followed, so listened to by king and people, by doctors and by idiots, by Pharisees and Sadducees, this man preached Jesus to the people, pointed out the Lamb of God, told that he must increase, and himself from all that fame must retire to give him place; he received him to baptism, after having with duty and modesty declared his own unworthiness to give, but rather a worthiness to receive baptism from the holy hands of Jesus; but at the solemnity God sent down the Holy Spirit upon his holy Son, and by a voice from heaven, a voice of thunder (and God was in that voice) declared that this was his Son, and that he was delighted in him.

This voice from heaven was such, so evident, so certain a conviction of what it did intend to prove, so known and accepted as the way of divine revelation under

under the second temple, that at that time every man that desired a sign honestly, would have been satisfied with such a voice; it being the testimony, by which God made all extraordinary to be credible to his people, from the days of Ezra, to the death of the nation; and that there was such a voice, not only then, but divers times after, was as certain, and made as evident, as things of that nature can ordinarily be made. For it being a matter of fact, cannot be supposed infinite, but limited to time and place, heard by a certain number of persons, and was as a clap of thunder upon ordinary accounts, which could be heard but by those who were within the sphere of its own activity; and reported by those to others, who are to give testimony, as testimonies are required, which are credible under the test of two or three disinterested, honest, and true men; and, though this was done in the presence of more, and oftener than once, yet it was a divine testimony but at first, but is to be conveyed by the means of men; and, as God thundered from heaven at the giving of the law (though that he did so, we have notice only from the books of Moses, received from the Jewish nation,) so he did in the days of the Baptist, and so he did to Peter, James, and John, and so he did in the presence of the Pharisees and many of the common people; and, as it is not to be supposed that all these would join their divided interests, for and against themselves, for the verification of a lie; so, if they would have done it, they could not have done it without reproach of their own parties, who would have been glad by the discovery only to disgrace the whole story. But, if the report of honest and just men so reputed, may be questioned for matter of fact, or may not be accounted sufficient to make faith, when there is no pretence of men to the contrary, besides, that we can have no story transmitted to us, no records kept, no acts of courts, no narratives of the days of old, no traditions of our fathers; so there could not be left in nature any usual instrument, whereby God could after the manner of man declare his own will to us, but either we should never know the will of Heaven upon earth, or it must be, that God must not only tell it once but always, and not only always to some men, but always to all men; and then, as there would be no use of history, or the honesty

of men, and their faithfulness in telling any act of God in declaration of his will, so there would be perpetual necessity of miracles, and we could not serve God directly with our understanding; for there would be no such thing as faith, that is, of assent without conviction of understanding, and we could not please God with believing, because there would be in it nothing of the will, nothing of love and choice; and that faith which is, would be like that of Thomas, to believe what we see or hear, and God should not at all govern upon earth, unless he did continually come himself; for thus, all government, all teachers, all apostles, all messengers would be needless, because they could not shew to the eye what they told to the ears of men; and it might as well be disbelieved in all courts and by all princes, that this was not the letter of a prince, or the act of a man, or the writing of his hand, and so all human intercourse must cease, and all senses, but the eye, be useless as to this affair, or else to the ear all voices must be strangers, but the principal, if, I say, no reports shall make faith. But it is certain, that when these voices were sent from heaven and heard upon earth, they prevailed amongst many that heard them not, and disciples were multiplied upon such accounts; or else it must be that none, that did hear them, could be believed by any of their friends and neighbours; for, if they were, the voice was as effective at the reflex and rebound, as in the direct emission, and could prevail with them that believed their brother or their friend, as certainly as with them that believed their own ears and eyes.

I need not speak of the vast numbers of miracles which he wrought; miracles, which were not more demonstrations of his power, than of his mercy; for they had nothing of pompousness and ostentation, but infinitely of charity and mercy, and that permanent and lasting and often: he opened the eyes of the blind, he made the crooked straight, he made the weak strong, he cured fevers with the touch of his hand, and an issue of blood with the hem of his garment, and sore eyes with the spittle of his mouth, and the clay of the earth; he multiplied the loaves and fishes, he raised the dead to life, a young maiden, the widow's son of Naim, and Lazarus, and cast out devils by the word of his mouth, which he could never do,

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but by the power of God, For Satan does not cast out Satan, nor a house fight against itself, if it means to stand long; and the devil could not help Jesus, because the holy Jesus taught men virtue, called them from the worshipping devils, taught them to resist the devil, to lay aside all those abominable idolatries by which the devil doth rule in the hearts of men: he taught men to love God, to fly from temptations to sin, to hate and avoid all those things of which the devil is guilty; for Christianity forbids pride, envy, malice, lying, and yet affirms, that the devil is proud, envious, malicious; and the father of lies; and therefore, wherever Christianity prevails, the devil is not worshipped, and therefore he that can think that a man without the power of God could overturn the devil's principles, cross his designs, weaken his strength, baffle him in his policies, befool him and turn him out of possession, and make him open his own mouth against himself, as he did often, and confess himself conquered by Jesus, and tormented, as the oracle did to Augustus Cæsar, and the devil to Jesus himself; he, I say, that thinks a mere man can do this, knows not the weaknesses of a man, nor the power of an angel; but he that thinks this could be done by compact, and by consent of the devil, must think him to be an intelligence, without understanding, a power without force, a fool and a sot to assist a power against himself, and to persecute the power he did assist, to stir up the world to destroy the Christians, whose Master and Lord he did assist to destroy himself; and, when we read that Porphyrius an Heathen, a professed enemy to Christianity, did say, *ἰσὺ τιμωμένη τις θεῶν ἀπορίας ὑφ' ἑαυτοῦ; ὅτι ἡσθίλο*, that since Jesus was worshipped, the gods could help no man, that is, the gods which they worshipped; the poor baffled enervated dæmons: he must either think that the devils are as foolish as they are weak, or else, that they did nothing towards this declination of their power; and therefore that they suffer it by a power higher than themselves, that is, by the power of God in the hand of Jesus.

But, besides that God gave testimony from heaven concerning him, he also gave this testimony of himself to have come from God, because that "he did God's will;" for he that is a good man and lives, by the laws of God and of his nation, a life inno-

cent and simple, prudent and wise, holy and spotless, unproved and unsuspected, he is certainly by all wise men said in a good sense to be the son of God; but he who does well and speaks well, and calls all men to glorify and serve God, and serves no ends but of holiness and charity, of wisdom of hearts and reformation of manners, this man carries great authority in his sayings, and ought to prevail with good men in good things, for good ends, which is all that is here required.

But his nature was so sweet, his manners so humble, his words so wise and composed, his comportment so grave and winning, his answers so reasonable, his questions so deep, his reproof so severe and charitable, his pity so great and merciful, his preachings so full of reason and holiness, of weight and authority, his conversation so useful and beneficent, his poverty great but his alms frequent, his family so holy and religious, his and their employment so profitable, his meekness so incomparable, his passions without difference, save only where zeal or pity carried him on to worthy and apt expressions, a person that never laughed, but often wept in a sense of the calamities of others: he loved every man and hated no man; he gave counsel to the doubtful, and instructed the ignorant; he bound up the broken hearts, and strengthened the feeble knees; he relieved the poor, and converted the sinners; he despised none that came to him for relief, and as for those that did not, he went to them; he took all occasions of mercy that were offered him, and went abroad for more; he spent his days in preaching and healing; and his nights in prayers and conversation with God: he was obedient to laws and subject to princes, though he was the Prince of Judæa in right of his mother, and of all the world in right of his father; the people followed him, but he made no conventions; and when they were made, he suffered no tumults; when they would have made him a king, he withdrew himself; when he knew they would put him to death, he offered himself; he knew men's hearts, and conversed secretly, and gave answer to their thoughts and prevented their questions; he would work a miracle rather than give offence, and yet suffer every offence rather than see God his father dishonoured; he exactly kept the law of Moses, to which he came to put a period, and yet chose to signify

signify his purpose only by doing acts of mercy upon their sabbath, doing nothing which they could call a breach of a commandment, but healing sick people, a charity, which themselves would do to beasts, and yet they were angry at him for doing it to their brethren.

In all his life, and in all his conversation with his nation, he was innocent as an angel of light; and when, by the greatness of his worth, and the severity of his doctrine, and the charity of his miracles, and the noises of the people, and his immense fame in all that part of the world, and the multitude of his disciples, and the authority of his sermons, and his free reproof of their hypocrisy, and his discovery of their false doctrines and weak traditions, he had branded the reputations of the vicious rulers of the people, and they resolved to put him to death, they who had the biggest malice in the world, and the weakest accusations, were forced to supply their want of articles against him by making truth to be his fault, and his office to be his crime, and his open confession of what was asked him to be his article of condemnation; and yet after all this they could not persuade the competent judge to condemn him, or to find him guilty of any fault, and therefore they were forced to threaten him with Caesar's name, against whom then they would pretend him to be an enemy, though in their charge they neither proved, nor indeed laid it against him; and yet to whatsoever they objected he made no return, but his silence and his innocence were remarkable and evident, without labour and reply, and needed no more argument than the sun needs an advocate to prove, that he is the brightest star in the firmament.

Well, so it was, they crucified him; and, when they did, they did as much put out the eye of heaven, as destroy the Son of God; for, when with an incomparable sweetness, and a patience exemplar to all ages of sufferers, he endured affronts, examinations, scorn, insolencies of rude ungentle tradesmen, cruel whippings, injurious, unjust, and unreasonable usages from those whom he obliged by all the arts of endearment and offers of the biggest kindness, at last he went to death, as to the work which God appointed him, that he might become the world's sacrifice, and the great example of holiness, and the instance of representing by what way the world was to be made happy (even by

sufferings and so entering into heaven;) that he might, I say, become the Saviour of his enemies, and the elder brother to his friends, and the Lord of Glory, and the fountain of its emanation. Then it was, that God gave new testimonies from heaven: the sun was eclipsed all the while he was upon the cross, and yet the moon was in the full; that is, he lost his light, not because any thing in nature did inveigh him, but because the God of nature (as a Heathen at that very time confessed, who yet saw nothing of this sad iniquity) did suffer. The rocks did rend, the veil of the temple divided of itself and opened the inclosures, and disparked the sanctuary, and made it perview to the Gentiles eye; the dead arose, and appeared in Jerusalem to their friends, the Centurion and divers of the people smote their hearts, and were by these strange indications convinced that he was the Son of God. His garments were parted, and lots cast upon his inward coat, they gave him vinegar and gall to drink, they brake not a bone of him, but they pierced his side with a spear, looking upon him whom they had pierced; according to the prophecies of him, which were so clear, and descended to minutes and circumstances of his passion, that there was nothing left by which they could doubt whether this were he or no who was to come into the world: but after all this, that all might be finally verified, and no scruple left, after three days burial, a great stone being rolled to the face of the grave, and the stone sealed, and a guard of soldiers placed about it, he arose from the grave, and for forty days together conversed with his followers and disciples, and beyond all suspicion was seen of five hundred brethren at once, which is a number too great to give their consent and testimony to a lie, and it being so publicly and confidently affirmed at the very time it was done, and for ever after urged by all Christians, used as the most mighty demonstration, proclaimed, preached, talked of, even upbraided to the gainsayers, affirmed by eye-witnesses, persuaded to the kindred and friends, and the relatives and companions of all those five hundred persons who were eye-witnesses, it is infinitely removed from a reasonable suspicion; and at the end of those days was taken up into heaven in the sight of many of them, as Elias was in the presence of Elisha.

Now he, of whom all these things are true, must needs be more than a mere man;

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man; and, that they were true, was affirmed by very many eye-witnesses, men, who were innocent, plain men, men that had no bad ends to serve; men, that looked for no preferment by the thing in this life; men, to whom their master told they were to expect not crowns and sceptres, not praise of men or wealthy possessions, not power and ease, but a voluntary casting away care and attendance upon secular affairs, that they might attend their ministry; poverty and prisons, trouble and vexation, persecution and labour, whippings and banishment, bonds and death; and for a reward they must stay till a good day came, but that was not to be at all in this world; and, when the day of restitution and recompense should come, they should never know till it came, but upon the hope of this and the faith of Jesus, and the word of God so taught, so conformed, they must rely wholly and for ever.

Now let it be considered, how could matters of fact be proved better? and how could this be any thing, but such as to rely upon matters of fact? what greater certainty can we have of any thing that was ever done which we saw not, or heard not, but by the report of wise and honest persons? especially, since they were such whose life and breeding was so far from ambition and pompousness, that, as they could not naturally and reasonably hope for any great number of proselytes, so the same that could be hoped for amongst them, as it must be a matter of their own procuring, and consequently uncertain, so it must needs be very inconsiderable, not fit to outweigh the danger and the loss, nor yet at all valuable by them whose education and pretences were against it? These we have plentifully. But if these men are numerous and united, it is more. Then we have more; for so many did affirm these things which they saw and heard, that thousands of people were convinced of the truth of them: but then, if these men offer their oath, it is yet more, but yet not so much as we have, for they sealed those things with their blood; they gave their life for a testimony; and what reward can any man expect, if he gives his life for a lie? who shall make him recompense, or what can tempt him to do it knowingly? but, after all, it is to be remembered, that as God hates lying, so he hates incredulity; as we must not believe a lie, so neither stop up our eyes and

ears against truth; and what we do every minute of our lives in matters of little and of great concernment, if we refuse to do in our religion, which yet is to be conducted as other human affairs are, by human instruments and arguments of persuasion, proper to the nature of the thing, it is an obstinacy, that is as contrary to human reason, as it is to divine faith.

These things relate to the person of the holy Jesus, and prove sufficiently that it was extraordinary, that it was divine, that God was with him, that his power wrought in him; and therefore that it was his will which Jesus taught, and God signed. But then if nothing of all this had been, yet even the doctrine itself proves itself divine, and to come from God.

Bishop Taylor.

§ 197. *Considerations respecting the doctrine of Jesus Christ.*

II. For it is a doctrine perfective of human nature, that teaches us to love God and to love one another, to hurt no man, and to do good to every man; it propines to us the noblest, the highest, and the bravest pleasures of the world; the joys of charity, the rest of innocence, the peace of quiet spirits, the wealth of beneficence, and forbids us only to be beasts and to be devils; it allows all that God and nature intended, and only restrains the excesses of nature, and forbids us to take pleasure in that which is the only entertainment of devils, in murders and revenges, malice and spiteful words and actions; it permits corporal pleasures, where they can best minister to health and societies, to conservation of families and honour of communities; it teaches men to keep their words, that themselves may be secured in all their just interests, and to do good to others, that good may be done to them; it forbids biting one another, that we may not be devoured by one another; and commands obedience to superiors, that we may not be ruined in confusion; it combines governments, and confirms all good laws, and makes peace, and opposes and prevents wars where they are not just, and where they are not necessary. It is a religion that is life and spirit, not consisting in ceremonies and external amusements, but in the services of the heart, and the real fruit of lips and hands, that is, of good words and good deeds; it bids us to do that to God which is agreeable to his excellencies,

cellencies, that is, worship him with the best thing we have, and make all things else minister to it; it bids us do that to our neighbour, by which he may be better: it is the perfection of the natural law, and agreeable to our natural necessities, and promotes our natural ends and designs: it does not destroy reason, but instructs it in very many things, and complies with it in all; it hath in it both heat and light, and is not more effectual than it is beautiful: it promises every thing that we can desire, and yet promises nothing but what it does effect; it proclaims war against all vices, and generally does command every virtue; it teaches us with ease to mortify those affections which reason durst scarce reprove, because she hath not strength enough to conquer; and it does create in us those virtues which reason of herself never knew, and after they are known, could never approve sufficiently: it is a doctrine, in which nothing is superfluous or burdensome; nor yet is there any thing wanting, which can procure happiness to mankind, or by which God can be glorified: and, if wisdom, and mercy, and justice, and simplicity, and holiness, and purity, and meekness, and contentedness, and charity, be images of God and rays of divinity, then that doctrine, in which all these shine so gloriously, and in which nothing else is ingredient, must needs be from God; and that all this is true in the doctrine of Jesus needs no other probation, but the reading the words.

For, that the words of Jesus are contained in the gospels, that is, in the writings of them, who were eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of the actions and sermons of Jesus, is not at all to be doubted; for in every sect we believe their own records of doctrine and institution: for it is madness to suppose the Christians to pretend to be servants of the laws of Jesus, and yet to make a law of their own which he made not: no man doubts but that the Alcoran is the law of Mahomet, that the Old Testament contains the religion of the Jews; and the authority of these books is proved by all the arguments of the religion, for all the arguments persuading to the religion, are intended to prove no other than is contained in those books; and, these having been, for fifteen hundred years and more, received absolutely by all Christian assemblies, if any man shall offer to make a question of their authority, he must declare his reasons, for the disciples of the

religion have sufficient presumption, security and possession, till they can be reasonably disturbed; but, that now they can never be, is infinitely certain, because we have a long, immemorial, universal tradition that these books were written in those times, by those men whose names they bear, they were accepted by all churches at the very first notice, except some few of the later, which were first received by some churches, and then consented to by all; they were acknowledged by the same, and by the next age for genuine, their authority published, their words cited, appeals made to them in all questions of religion, because it was known and confessed that they wrote nothing but that they knew, so that they were not deceived; and to say, they would lie, must be made to appear by something extrinsic to this inquiry, and was never so much as plausibly pretended by any adversaries, and it being a matter of another man's will, must be declared by actions, or not at all.

But, besides, the men that wrote them were to be believed, because they did miracles, they wrote prophecies, which are verified by the event, persons were cured at their sepulchres, a thing so famous that it was confessed even by the enemies of the religion: and, after all, that which the world ought to rely upon, is the wisdom and the providence, and the goodness of God; all which it concerned to take care that the religion, which himself so adorned and proved by miracles and mighty signs, should not be lost, nor any false writings be obtruded instead of true, lest, without our fault, the will of God become impossible to be obeyed.

But to return to the thing: all those excellent things, which singly did make famous so many sects of philosophers, and remarked so many princes of their sects, all them united, and many more, which their eyes, *ἐκμαρτα νοσέειν*, dark and dim, could not see, are heaped together in this system of wisdom and holiness. Here, are plain precepts, full of deepest mystery; here, are the measures of holiness and approaches to God described; obedience and conformity, mortification of the body, and elevations of the spirit, abstractions from earth, and arts of society, and union with heaven, degrees of excellencies, and tendencies to perfection, imitations of God, and conversations with him; these are the heights and descents, upon the plain grounds of natural

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natural reason, and natural religion; for there is nothing commanded but what our reason by nature ought to choose, and yet nothing of natural reason taught but what is heightened and made more perfect by the Spirit of God; and, when there is any thing in the religion, that is against flesh and blood, it is only when flesh and blood is against us, and against reason, when flesh and blood either would hinder us from great felicity, or bring us into great misery: to conclude, it is such a law, that nothing can hinder men to receive and entertain, but a pertinacious baseness and love to vice, and none can receive it but those who resolve to be good and excellent; and, if the holy Jesus had come into the world with less splendor of power and mighty demonstrations, yet, even the excellency, of what he taught, makes him alone fit to be the master of the world.

Bishop Taylor.

§ 198. *Considerations respecting the effect, and the instruments, of Christ's religion.*

III. But then let us consider what this excellent person did effect, and with what instruments he brought so great things to pass. He was to put a period to the rites of Moses, and the religion of the temple, of which the Jews were zealous even unto pertinacy; to reform the manners of all mankind, to confound the wisdom of the Greeks, to break in pieces the power of the devil, to destroy the worship of all false gods, to pull down their oracles, and change their laws, and by principles wise and holy to reform the false discourses of the world.

But see what was to be taught, A trinity in the unity of the Godhead, *τρία ἓν καὶ ἓν τρία*, that is the Christian arithmetic, Three are one, and one are three, so Lucian in his *Philopatrias*, or some other, derides the Christian doctrine; see their philosophy. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*. No: *Ex nihilo omnia*, all things are made of nothing; and a man-god and a god-man, the same person finite and infinite, born in time, and yet from all eternity the Son of God, but yet born of a woman, and she a maid, but yet a mother; resurrection of the dead, reunion of soul and body; this was part of the Christian physicks or their natural philosophy.

But then certainly 'their moral was easy and delicious.' It is so indeed, but not to flesh and blood, whose appetites it

pretends to regulate or to destroy, to restrain or else to mortify: "fasting and penance, and humility, loving our enemies, restitution of injuries, and self-denial, and taking up the cross, and losing all our goods, and giving our life for Jesus:" as the other was hard to believe, so this is as hard to do.

But for whom and under whose conduct was all this to be believed, and all this to be done, and all this to be suffered? Surely, for some glorious and mighty prince, whose splendor as far outshines the Roman empire, as the jewels of Cleopatra outshined the swaddling clothes of the babe at Bethlehem. No, it was not so neither. For all this was for Jesus, whom his followers preached; a poor babe, born in a stable, the son of a carpenter, cradled in a cratch, swaddled in poor clouts; it was for him whom they indeed called a God, but yet whom all the world knew, and they themselves said, was whipped at a post, nailed to a cross; he fell under the malice of the Jews his countrymen, and the power of his Roman lords, a cheap and a pitiful sacrifice, without beauty and without splendor.

The design is great, but does not yet seem possible; but therefore let us see what instruments the Holy Jesus chose, to effect those so mighty changes, to persuade so many propositions, to endear so great sufferings, to overcome so great enemies, to master so many impossibilities which this doctrine and this law from this Master were sure to meet withal.

Here, here it is that the Divinity of the power is proclaimed. When a man goes to war, he raises as great an army as he can to out-number his enemy; but, when God fights, three hundred men, that lap like a dog, are sufficient; nay, one word can dissolve the greatest army. He that means to effect any thing must have means of his own proportionable; and if they be not, he must fail, or derive them from the mighty. See then with what instruments the holy Jesus sets upon this great reformation of the world.

Twelve men of obscure and poor birth, of contemptible trades and quality, without learning, without breeding; these men were sent into the midst of a knowing and wise world, to dispute with the most famous philosophers of Greece, to out-wit all the learning of Athens, to out-preach all the Roman orators; to introduce into a newly-

settled empire, which would be impatient of novelties and change, such a change as must destroy all their temples, or remove thence all their gods: against which change all the zeal of the world, and all the passions, and all the seeming pretences which they could make, must needs be violently opposed: a change, that introduced new laws, and caused them to reverse the old, to change that religion under which their fathers long did prosper, and under which the Roman empire obtained so great a grandeur, for a religion, which in appearance was silly and humble, meek and peaceable, not apt indeed to do harm, but exposing men to all the harm in the world, abating their courage, blunting their swords, teaching peace and unactiveness, and making the soldiers arms in a manner useless, and untying their military girdle: a religion, which contradicted their reasons of state, and erected new judicatories, and made the Roman courts to be silent and without causes; a religion, that gave countenance to the poor and pitiful (but in a time when riches were adored, and ambition esteemed the greatest nobleness, and pleasure thought to be the chiefest good) it brought no peculiar blessing to the rich or mighty, unless they would become poor and humble in some real sense or other; a religion, that would change the face of things, and would also pierce into the secrets of the soul, and unravel all the intrigues of hearts, and reform all evil manners, and break vile habits into gentleness and counsel: that such a religion in such a time, preached by such mean persons, should triumph over the philosophy of the world, and the arguments of the subtle, and the sermons of the eloquent, and the power of princes, and the interest of states, and the inclinations of nature, and the blindness of zeal, and the force of custom, and the pleasures of sin, and the busy arts of the devil, that is, against wit, and power, and money, and religion, and wilfulness, and fame, and empire, which are all the things in the world that can make a thing impossible; this, I say, could not be by the proper force of such instruments; for no man can span heaven with an infant's palm, nor govern wise empires with diagrams.

It were impudence to send a footman to command Cæsar to lay down his arms, to disband his legions, and throw himself into Tyber, or keep a tavern next to Pompey's

theatre; but, if a sober man shall stand alone, unarmed, undefended, or unprovided, and shall tell that he will make the sun stand still, or remove a mountain, or reduce Xerxes's army to the scantling of a single troop, he that believes he will and can do this, must believe he does it by a higher power, than he can yet perceive; and so it was in the present transaction. For that the holy Jesus made invisible powers to do him visible honours, that his apostles hunted the demons from their tripods, their navels, their dens, their hollow pipes, their temples, and their altars; that he made the oracles silent, as Lucian, Porphyry, Celsus, and other Heathens confess; that, against the order of new things, which let them be never so profitable or good do yet suffer reproach, and cannot prevail unless they commence in a time of advantage and favour; yet, that this should flourish like the palm by pressure, grow glorious by opposition, thrive by persecution, and was demonstrated by objections, argues a higher cause than the immediate instrument. Now how this higher cause did intervene, is visible and notorious: the apostles were not learned, but the holy Jesus promised that he would send down wisdom from above, from the father of spirits; they had no power, but they should be invested with power from on high; they were ignorant and timorous, but he would make them learned and confident, and so he did: he promised that in a few days he would send the Holy Ghost upon them, and he did so; after ten days they felt and saw glorious immision from heaven, lights of moveable fire sitting upon their heads, and that light did illuminate their hearts, and the mighty rushing wind inspired them with a power of speaking divers languages, and brought to their remembrances all that Jesus did and taught, and made them wise to conduct souls, and bold to venture, and prudent to advise, and powerful to do miracles, and witty to convince gainfayers, and hugely instructed in the scriptures, and gave them the spirit of government, and the spirit of prophecy.

This thing was so public, that at the first notice of it three thousand souls were converted on that very day, at the very time when it was done; for it was certainly a visible demonstration of an invisible power, that ignorant persons, who were never taught, should in an instant speak all the languages of the Roman empire; and indeed

deed this thing was so necessary to be so, and so certain that it was so, so public and so evident, and so reasonable, and so useful, that it is not easy to say whether it was the indication of a greater power, or a greater wisdom; and now the means was proportionable enough to the biggest end: without learning, they could not confute the learned world; but therefore God became their teacher: without power, they could not break the devil's violence: but therefore God gave them power: without courage, they could not contest against all the violence of the Jews and Gentiles; but therefore God was their strength, and gave them fortitude: without great caution and providence, they could not avoid the traps of crafty persecutors; but therefore God gave them caution, and made them provident, and, as Beseleel and Aholiab received the spirit of God, the spirit of understanding to enable them to work excellently in the Tabernacle, so had the apostles to make them wise for the work of God and the ministries of this diviner tabernacle, which God pitched, not man.

Immediately upon this, the apostles, to make a fulness of demonstration and an undeniable conviction, gave the spirit to others also, to Jews and Gentiles, and to the men of Samaria, and they spake with tongues and prophesied; then they preached to all nations, and endured all persecutions, and cured all diseases, and raised the dead to life, and were brought before tribunals, and confessed the name of Jesus, and convinced the blasphemous Jews out of their own prophets, and not only prevailed upon women and weak men, but even upon the bravest and wisest. All the disciples of John the Baptist, the Nazarenes and Ebionites, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, Sergius the president, Dionysius an Athenian judge, and Polycarpus, Justinus and Irenæus, Athenagoras and Origen, Tertullian and Clemens of Alexandria, who could not be such fools as, upon a matter not certainly true but probably false, to unravel their former principles, and to change their liberty for a prison, wealth for poverty, honour for disreputation, life for death, if by such exchange they had not been secured of truth and holiness and the will of God.

But, above all these, was Saul, a bold and a witty a zealous and learned young man, who, going with letters to persecute the Christians of Damascus, was by a light

from heaven called from his furious march, reproved by God's angel for persecuting the cause of Jesus, was sent to the city, baptized by a Christian minister, instructed and sent abroad; and he became the prodigy of the world, for learning and zeal, for preaching and writing, for labour and sufferance, for government and wisdom: he was admitted to see the holy Jesus after the Lord was taken into heaven, he was taken up into Paradise, he conversed with angels, he saw unspeakable rays of glory; and besides that himself said it, who had no reason to lie, who would get nothing by it here but a conjugation of troubles, and who would get nothing by it hereafter if it were false; besides this, I say, that he did all those acts of zeal and obedience for the promotion of the religion, does demonstrate he had reason extraordinary for so sudden a change, so strange a labour, so frequent and incomparable sufferings; and therefore, as he did and suffered so much upon such glorious motives, so he spared not to publish it to all the world, he spake it to kings and princes, he told it to the envious Jews; he had partners of his journey, who were witnesses of the miraculous accident; and in his publication he urged the notoriety of the fact, as a thing not feigned, not private, but done at noon-day under the test of competent persons; and it was a thing that proved itself, for it was effective of a present, a great, and a permanent change.

But now it is no new wonder, but a pursuance of the same conjugation of great and divine things, that the same and religion of Jesus was with so incredible a swiftness scattered over the face of the habitable world, from one end of the earth unto the other; it filled all Asia immediately, it passed presently to Europe, and to the furthest Africans; and all the way it went it told nothing but a holy and an humble story, that he who came to bring it into the world, died an ignominious death, and yet this death did not take away their courage, but added much: for they could not fear death for that Master, whom they knew to have for their sakes suffered death, and came to life again. But now infinite numbers of persons of both sexes, and all ages, and all countries, came in to the holy crucifix; and he that was crucified in the reign of Tiberius, was in the time of Nero, even in Rome itself, and in

Nero's family by many persons esteemed for a God; and it was upon public record that he was so acknowledged; and this was by a Christian, Justin Martyr, urged to the senate, and to the emperors themselves, who if it had been otherwise could easily have confuted the bold allegation of the Christian, who yet did die for that Jesus who was so speedily reputed for a God; the cross was worn upon breasts, printed in the air, drawn upon foreheads, carried on banners, put upon crowns imperial; and yet the Christians were sought for to punishments, and exquisite punishments sought forth for them; their goods were confiscate, their names odious, prisons were their houses, and so many kinds of tortures invented for them, that Domitius Ulpianus hath spent seven books in describing the variety of tortures the poor Christian was put to at his first appearing; and yet, in despite of all this, and ten thousand other objections and impossibilities, whatsoever was for them made the religion grow, and whatsoever was against them made it grow; if they had peace, the religion was prosperous; if they had persecution, it was still prosperous; if princes favoured them, the world came in, because the Christians lived holily; if princes were incensed, the world came in, because the Christians died bravely. They fought for death with greediness, they desired to be grinded in the teeth of lions; and with joy they beheld the wheels and the bended trees, the racks and the gibbets, the fires and the burning irons, which were like the chair of Elias to them, instruments to carry them to heaven, into the bosom of their beloved Jesus.

Who would not acknowledge the divinity of this person, and the excellency of this institution, that should see infants to weary the hands of hangmen for the testimony of Jesus; and wise men preach this doctrine for no other visible reward, but shame and death, poverty and banishment? and hangmen converted by the blood of martyrs, springing upon their faces, which their impious hands and cords have strained through their flesh? Who would not have confessed the honour of Jesus, when he should see miracles done at the tombs of martyrs, and devils tremble at the mention of the name of Jesus, and the world running to the honour of the poor Nazarene, and kings and queens kissing the feet of the poor servants of Jesus? Could

a Jew fisherman and a publican effect all this, for the son of a poor maiden of Judea? can we suppose all the world, or so great a part of mankind, can consent by chance, or suffer such changes for nothing? or for any thing less than this? The son of the poor maiden was the Son of God: and the fishermen spake by a divine spirit; and they caught the world with holiness and miracles, with wisdom and power bigger than the strength of all the Roman legions. And what can be added to all this, but this thing alone to prove the divinity of Jesus? He is a God, or at least is taught by God, who can foretell future contingencies; and so did the holy Jesus, and so did his disciples.

Our blessed Lord, while he was alive, foretold that after his death his religion should flourish more than when he was alive: he foretold persecutions to his disciples: he foretold the mission of the Holy Ghost to be in a very few days after his ascension, which within ten days came to pass: he prophesied that the fact of Mary Magdalene, in anointing the head and feet of her Lord, should be public and known as the gospel itself, and spoken of in the same place; he foretold the destruction of Jerusalem and the signs of its approach, and that it should be by war, and particularly after the manner of prophets, symbolically, named the nation should do it, pointing out the Roman eagles; he foretold his death, and the manner of it, and plainly before-hand published his resurrection, and told them it should be the sign to that generation, viz. the great argument to prove him to be the Christ; he prophesied that there should arise false Christs after him, and it came to pass to the extreme great calamity of the nation; and lastly, he foretold that his beloved disciple St. John should tarry upon the earth till his coming again, that is, to his coming to judgment upon Jerusalem; and that his religion should be preached to the Gentiles, that it should be scattered over all the world, and be received by all nations; that it should stay upon the face of the earth till his last coming to judge all the world, and that "the gates of hell should not be able to prevail against his church;" which prophecy is made good thus long, till this day, and is as a continual argument to justify the divinity of the author: the continuance of the religion helps to continue it, for it proves that it came from God, who

who foretold that it should continue; and therefore it must continue, because it came from God; and therefore it came from God, because it does and shall for ever continue according to the word of the holy Jesus.

But, after our blessed Lord was entered into glory, the disciples also were prophets. Agabus foretold the dearth that was to be in the Roman empire in the days of Claudius Cæsar, and that St. Paul should be bound at Jerusalem: St. Paul foretold the entering-in of Hereticks into Asia after his departure; and he and St. Peter and St. Jude, and generally the rest of the apostles, had two great predictions, which they used not only as a verification of the doctrine of Jesus, but as a means to strengthen the hearts of the disciples, who were so broken with persecution; the one was, that there should arise a sect of vile men, who should be enemies to religion and government, and cause a great apostacy, which happened notoriously in the sect of the Gnostics, which those three apostles and St. John notoriously and plainly do describe: and the other was, that although the Jewish nation did mightily oppose the religion, it should be but for a while, for they should be destroyed in a short time, and their nation made extremely miserable; but, for the Christians, if they would fly from Jerusalem and go to Pella, there should not a hair of their head perish: the verification of this prophecy the Christians extremely longed for, and wondered it stayed so long, and began to be troubled at the delay, and suspected all was not well, when the great proof of their religion was not verified; and, while they were in thoughts of heart concerning it, the sad catalysis did come, and swept away eleven hundred thousand of the nation: and from that day forward the nation was broken in pieces with intolerable calamities: they are scattered over the face of the earth, and are a vagabond nation, but yet, like oil in a vessel of wine, broken into bubbles but kept in their own circles; and they shall never be an united people, till they are servants of the holy Jesus; but shall remain without priest or temple, without altar or sacrifice, without city or country, without the land of promise, or the promise of a blessing, till our Jesus is their high Priest, and their Shepherd to gather them into his fold: and this very thing is a mighty demonstration against the Jews

by their own prophets; for when Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Malachi, had prophesied the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, and the change of the old law, and the introduction of a new by the Messias; that this was lie, was therefore certain, because he taught the world a new law, and presently after the publication of this, the old was abrogate, and not only went into desuetude, but into a total abolition among all the world; and for those of the remnant of the scattered Jews who obstinately blaspheme, the law is become impossible to them, and they placed in such circumstances, that they need not dispute concerning its obligation; for it being external and corporal, ritual, and at last made also local, when the circumstances are impossible, the law, that was wholly ceremonial and circumstantial, must needs pass away: and when they have lost their priesthood, they cannot retain the law, as no man takes care to have his beard shaved, when his head is off.

And it is a wonder to consider how the anger of God is gone out upon that miserable people, and that so great a blindness is fallen upon them; it being evident and notorious that the Old Testament was nothing but a shadow and umbrage of the New; that the prophecies of that are plainly verified in this; that all the predictions of the Messias are most undeniably accomplished in the person of Jesus Christ, so that they cannot with any plausibleness or colour be turned any other way, and be applied to any other person, although the Jews make illiterate allegations, and prodigious dreams, by which they have fooled themselves for sixteen hundred years together, and still hope without reason, and are confident without revelation, and pursue a shadow while they quit the glorious body; while, in the mean time, the Christian prays for his conversion, and is at rest in the truth of Jesus, and hath certain unexpressible confidences and internal lights, clarities of the Holy Spirit of God, and loves to the holy Jesus produced in his soul that he will die when he cannot dispute, and is satisfied and he knows not how, and is sure by comforts, and comforted by the excellency of his belief, which speaks nothing but holiness, and light and reason, and peace and satisfactions infinite, because he is sure that all the world can be happy if they would live by the religion of Jesus, and that neither societies of men nor single persons

persons can have felicity but by this; and that therefore God, who so decrees to make men happy, hath also decreed that it shall for ever be upon the face of the earth, till the earth itself shall be no more. Amen.

Bishop Taylor.

§ 199. *Considerations on the weak Pretences of other Religions.*

IV. Now, if against this vast heap of things any man shall but confront the pretences of any other religion, and see how they fail both of reason and holiness, of wonder and divinity, how they enter by force, and are kept up by human interests, how ignorant and unholy, how unlearned and pitiful are their pretences; the dark-nesses of these must add great eminency to the brightness of that.

For the Jews religion, which came from heaven, is therefore not now to be practised, because it did come from heaven, and was to expire into the Christian, it being nothing but the image of this perfection: and the Jews needed no other argument but this, that God hath made this impossible now to be done; for he that ties to ceremonies and outward usages, temples and altars, sacrifices and priests, troublesome and expensive rites and figures of future signification, means that there should be an abode and fixt dwelling, for these are not to be done by an ambulatory people; and therefore, since God hath scattered the people into atoms and crumbs of society, without temple or priest, without sacrifice or altar, without Urim or Thummim, without prophet or vision, even communicating with them no way but by ordinary providence, it is but too evident, that God hath nothing to do with them in the matter of that religion; but that it is expired, and no way obligatory to them or pleasing to him, which is become impossible to be acted; whereas, the Christian religion is as eternal as the soul of a man, and can no more cease than our spirits can die, and can worship upon mountains and caves, in fields and churches, in peace and war, in solitude and society, in persecution and in sun-shine, by night and by day, and be solemnized by clergy and laity in the essential parts of it, and is the perfection of the soul, and the highest reason of man, and the glorification of God.

But for the Heathen religions, it is evidently to be seen, that they are nothing

but an abuse of the natural inclination which all men have to worship a God, whom because they know not, they guess at in the dark; for that they know there is and ought to be something that hath the care and providence of their affairs, But the body of their religion is nothing but little arts of governments, and stratagems of princes, and devices to secure the government of new usurpers, or to make obedience to the laws sure, by being sacred, and to make the yoke that was not natural, pleasant by something that is. But yet, for the whole body of it, who sees not, that their worshippings could not be sacred, because they were done by something that is impure? They appeased their gods with adulteries and impure mixtures, by such things which Cato was ashamed to see, by gluttonous eatings of flesh, and impious drinkings, and they did litare in humano sanguine, they sacrificed men and women and children to their dæmons, as is notorious in the rites of Bacchus Omesta amongst the Greeks, and of Jupiter, to whom a Greek and a Greekess, a Galatian and a Galates were yearly offered; in the answers of the oracles to Calchas, as appears in Homer and Virgil. Who sees not, that crimes were warranted by the example of their immortal gods; and that what did dishonour themselves, they sang to the honour of their gods, whom they affirmed to be passionate and proud, jealous and revengeful, amorous and lustful, fearful and impatient, drunken and sleepy, weary and wounded? that the religions were made lasting by policy and force, by ignorance, and the force of custom; by the preferring an inveterate error, and loving of a quiet and prosperous evil; by the arguments of pleasure, and the correspondencies of sensuality; by the fraud of oracles, and the patronage of vices; and because they feared every change as an earthquake, as supposing overturnings of their old error to be the eversion of their well-established governments? And it had been ordinarily impossible that ever Christianity should have entered, if the nature and excellency of it had not been such as to enter like rain into a fleece of wool, or the sun into a window, without noise or violence, without emotion and disordering the political constitution, without causing trouble to any man but what his own ignorance or peevishness was pleased to spin out of his own bowels;

bowels; but did establish governments, secure obedience, made the laws firm, and the persons of princes to be sacred; it did not oppose force by force, nor strike princes for justice; it defended itself against enemies by patience, and overcame them by kindness; it was the great instrument of God to demonstrate his power in our weaknesses, and to do good to mankind by the imitation of his excellent goodness,

Lastly, he that considers concerning the religion and person of Mahomet: that he was a vicious person, lustful and tyrannical; that he propounded incredible and ridiculous propositions to his disciples; that it entered by the sword, by blood and violence, by murder and robbery; that it propounds sensual rewards, and allures to compliance by bribing our basest lusts; that it conserves itself by the same means it entered: that it is unlearned and foolish, against reason, and the discourses of all wise men; that it did no miracles, and made false prophecies; in short, that in the person that founded it, in the article it persuades, in the manner of prevailing, in the reward it offers, it is unholy and foolish and rude; it must needs appear to be void of all pretence; and that no man of reason can ever be fairly persuaded by arguments, that it is the daughter of God, and came down from heaven.

CONCLUSION.

Since therefore there is nothing to be said for any other religion, and so very much for Christianity, every one of whose pretences can be proved, as well as the things themselves do require, and as all the world expects such things should be proved; it follows, that the holy Jesus is the Son of God; that his religion is commanded by God, and is that way by which he will be worshipped and honoured; and that "there is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved, but only the name of the Lord Jesus."

Bishop Taylor.

§ 202. *To the Sceptics and Infidels of the Age.*

Gentlemen,

Suppose the mighty work accomplished, the cross trampled upon, Christianity every where proscribed, and the religion of nature once more become the religion of

Europe; what advantage will you have derived to your country, or to yourselves, from the exchange? I know your answer—you will have freed the world from the hypocrisy of priests, and the tyranny of superstition.—No; you forget that Lycurgus, and Numa, and Odin, and Mango-Copac, and all the great legislators of ancient or modern story, have been of opinion, that the affairs of civil society could not well be conducted without some religion; you must of necessity introduce a priesthood, with, probably, as much hypocrisy; a religion, with, assuredly, more superstition, than that which you now reprobate with such indecent and ill-grounded contempt. But I will tell you, from what you will have freed the world; you will have freed it from its abhorrence of vice, and from every powerful incentive to virtue; you will, with the religion, have brought back the depraved morality of Paganism; you will have robbed mankind of their firm assurance of another life; and thereby you will have despoiled them of their patience, of their humility, of their charity, of their chastity, of all those mild and silent virtues, which (however despicable they may appear in your eyes) are the only ones, which meliorate and sublime our nature; which Paganism never knew, which spring from Christianity alone, which do or might constitute our comfort in this life, and without the possession of which, another life, if after all there should happen to be one, must be more vicious and more miserable than this is, unless a miracle be exerted in the alteration of our disposition.

Perhaps you will contend, that the universal light of reason, that the truth and fitness of things, are of themselves sufficient to exalt the nature, and regulate the manners of mankind. Shall we never have done with this groundless commendation of natural law? Look into the first chapter of Paul's epistle to the Romans, and you will see the extent of its influence over the Gentiles of those days, or if you dislike Paul's authority, and the manners of antiquity; look into the more admired accounts of modern voyagers; and examine its influence over the sensual inhabitants of Otaheite, over the cannibals of New Zeland, or the remorseless savages of America. But these men are Barbarians.—Your law of nature, notwithstanding, extends even

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to them:—but they have misused their reason:—they have then the more need of, and would be the more thankful for that revelation, which you, with an ignorant and fastidious self-sufficiency deem useless.—But, they might of themselves, if they thought fit, become wise and virtuous.—I answer with Cicero, *Ut nihil interest, utrum nemo valeat, an nemo valere possit; sic non intelligo quid intersit, utrum nemo sit sapiens, an nemo esse possit.*

These, however, you will think, are extraordinary instances; and that we ought not from these, to take our measure of the excellency of the law of nature; but rather from the civilized states of China and Japan, or from the nations which flourished in learning and in arts, before Christianity was heard of in the world. You mean to say, that by the law of nature, which you are desirous of substituting in the room of the gospel, you do not understand those rules of conduct, which an individual, abstracted from the community, and deprived of the institution of mankind, could excogitate for himself; but such a system of precepts, as the most enlightened men of the most enlightened ages, have recommended to our observance. Where do you find this system? We cannot meet with it in the works of Stobæus, or the Scythian Anacharsis; nor in those of Plato, or of Cicero, nor in those of the emperor Antoninus, or the slave Epictetus; for we are persuaded, that the most animated considerations of the *æternity*, and the honesty, of the beauty of virtue, and the fitness of things, are not able to furnish, even a Brutus himself, with permanent principles of action; much less are they able to purify the polluted recesses of a vitiated heart, to curb the irregularities of appetite, or restrain the impetuosity of passion in common men. If you order us to examine the works of Grotius, or Puffendorf, or Burlamaqui, or Hutchinson, for what you understand by the law of nature; we apprehend that you are in a great error, in taking your notions of natural law, as discoverable by natural reason, from the elegant systems of it, which have been drawn up by Christian philosophers; since they have all laid their foundations, either tacitly or expressly, upon a principle derived from revelation. A thorough knowledge of the being and attributes of God: and even those amongst

yourselves, who, rejecting Christianity, still continue Theists, are indebted to revelation (whether you are either aware of, or disposed to acknowledge the debt, or not) for those sublime speculations concerning the deity, which you have fondly attributed to the excellency of your own unassisted reason. If you would know the real strength of natural reason, and how far it can proceed in the investigation or enforcement of moral duties, you must consult the manners and the writings of those, who have never heard of either the Jewish or the Christian dispensation, or of those other manifestations of himself, which God vouchsafed to Adam and to the patriarchs, before and after the flood. It would be difficult perhaps any where, to find a people entirely destitute of traditional notices concerning a deity, and of traditional fears or expectations of another life; and the morals of mankind may have, perhaps, been no where quite so abandoned, as they would have been, had they been left wholly to themselves in these points: however, it is a truth, which cannot be denied, how much soever it may be lamented, that though the generality of mankind have always had some faint conceptions of God, and his providence; yet they have been always greatly inefficacious in the production of good morality, and highly derogatory to his nature, amongst all the people of the earth, except the Jews and Christians; and some may perhaps be desirous of excepting the Mahometans, who derive all that is good in their Koran from Christianity.

The laws concerning justice, and the reparation of damages, concerning the security of property, and the performance of contracts; concerning, in short, whatever affects the well-being of civil society, have been every where understood with sufficient precision; and if you choose to stile Justinian's code, a code of natural law, though you will err against propriety of speech, yet you are so far in the right, that natural reason discovered, and the depravity of human nature compelled human kind, to establish by proper sanctions the laws therein contained; and you will have moreover Carneades, no mean philosopher, on your side; who knew of no law of nature, different from that which men had instituted for their common utility; and which was various according to the manners

manners of men in different climates, and changeable with a change of times in the same. And in truth in all countries where Paganism has been the established religion, though a philosopher may now and then have stepped beyond the pale prescript of civil jurisprudence, in his pursuit of virtue; yet the bulk of mankind have ever been contented with that scanty pittance of morality, which enabled them to escape the lash of civil punishment; I call it a scanty pittance; because a man may be intemperate, iniquitous, impious, a thousand ways a profligate and a villain, and yet elude the cognizance, and avoid the punishment of civil laws.

I am sensible, you will be ready to say, what is all this to the purpose? though the bulk of mankind may never be able to investigate the laws of natural religion, nor disposed to reverence their sanctions when investigated by others, nor solicitous about any other standard of moral rectitude, than civil legislation; yet the inconveniencies which may attend the extirpation of Christianity, can be no proof of its truth.—I have not produced them, as a proof of its truth; but they are a strong and conclusive proof, if not of its truth, at least of its utility; and the consideration of its utility, may be a motive to yourselves for examining, whether it may not chance to be true; and it ought to be a reason with every good citizen, and with every man of sound judgment, to keep his opinions to himself, if from any particular circumstances in his studies or in his education he should have the misfortune to think that it is not true. If you can discover to the rising generation, a better religion than the Christian, one that will more effectually animate their hopes, and subdue their passions, make them better men, or better members of society, we importune you to publish it for their advantage; but till you can do that, we beg of you, not to give the reins to their passions, by instilling into their unsuspecting minds your pernicious prejudices: even now, men scruple not, by their lawless lust, to ruin the repose of private families, and to fix a stain of infamy on the noblest; even now, they hesitate not, in lifting up a murderous arm against the life of their friend, or against their own, as often as the fever of intemperance stimulates their resentment, or the satiety of an

useless life excites their despondency: even now, whilst we are persuaded of a resurrection from the dead, and of a judgment to come, we find it difficult enough to resist the solicitations of sense, and to escape unspotted from the licentious manners of the world: But what will become of our virtue, what of the consequent peace and happiness of society, if you persuade us, that there are no such things? in two words,—you may ruin yourselves by your attempt, and you will certainly ruin your country by your success.

But the consideration of the inutility of your design, is not the only one, which should induce you to abandon it; the argument a tuto ought to be warily managed, or it may tend to the silencing our opposition to any system of superstition, which has had the good fortune to be sanctioned by public authority; it is, indeed, liable to no objection in the present case; we do not, however, wholly rely upon its cogency. It is not contended, that Christianity is to be received, merely because it is useful: but because it is true. This you deny, and think your objections well grounded; we conceive them originating in your vanity, your immorality, or your misapprehension. There are many worthless doctrines, many superstitious observances, which the fraud or folly of mankind have every where annexed to Christianity, (especially in the church of Rome) as essential parts of it; if you take these sorry appendages to Christianity, for Christianity itself, as preached by Christ, and by the apostles; if you confound the Roman, with the Christian religion, you quite misapprehend its nature; and are in a state similar to that of men, (mentioned by Plutarch, in his treatise of superstition) who flying from superstition, leapt over religion, and sunk into downright atheism.—Christianity is not a religion very palatable to a voluptuous age; it will not conform its precepts to the standard of fashion; it will not lessen the deformity of vice by lenient appellations; but calls keeping, whoredom; intrigue, adultery; and duelling, murder; it will not pander the lust, it will not license the intemperance of mankind; it is a troublesome monitor to a man of pleasure; and your way of life may have made you quarrel with your religion.—As to your vanity, as a cause of your infidelity, suffer

me to produce the sentiments of M. Bayle upon that head; if the description does not suit your character, you will not be offended at it; and if you are offended with its freedom, it will do you good: 'This inclines me to believe, that libertines, like Des-Barreaux, are not greatly persuaded of the truth of what they say. They have made no deep examination, they have learned some few objections, which they are perpetually making a noise with; they speak from a principle of ostentation, and give themselves the lie in the time of danger.—Vanity has a greater share in their disputes, than conscience; they imagine, that the singularity and boldness of the opinions which they maintain, will give them the reputation of men of parts:—by degrees, they get a habit of holding impious discourses; and if their vanity be accompanied by a voluptuous life, their progress in that road is the swifter.'

The main stress of your objections, rests not upon the insufficiency of the external evidence to the truth of Christianity; for few of you, though you may become the future ornaments of the senate, or of the bar, have ever employed an hour in its examination; but it rests upon the difficulty of the doctrines, contained in the New Testament: they exceed, you say, your comprehension; and you felicitate yourselves, that you are not yet arrived at the true standard of orthodox faith,—*credo quia impossibile*. You think, it would be taking a superfluous trouble, to enquire into the nature of the external proofs, by which Christianity is established; since, in your opinion, the book itself carries with it its own refutation. A gentleman as acute, probably, as any of you; and who once believed, perhaps, as little as any of you, has drawn a quite different conclusion from the perusal of the New Testament; his book (however exceptionable it may be thought in some particular parts) exhibits, not only a distinguished triumph of reason over prejudice, of Christianity over deism; but it exhibits, what is infinitely more rare, the character of a man, who has had courage and candour enough to acknowledge it.

But what if there should be some incomprehensible doctrines in the Christian religion; some circumstances, which in their causes, or their consequences, sur-

pass the reach of human reason; are they to be rejected upon that account? You are, or would be thought, men of reading, and knowledge, and enlarged understandings; weigh the matter fairly; and consider whether revealed religion be not, in this respect, just upon the same footing, with every other object of your contemplation. Even in mathematics, the science of demonstration itself, though you get over its first principles, and learn to digest the idea of a point without parts, a line without breadth, and a surface without thickness; yet you will find yourselves at a loss to comprehend the perpetual approximation of lines, which can never meet; the doctrine of incommensurables, and of an infinity of infinites, each infinitely greater, or infinitely less, not only than any finite quantity, but than each other. In physics, you cannot comprehend the primary cause of any thing; not of the light, by which you see; nor of the elasticity of the air, by which you hear; nor of the fire, by which you are warmed. In physiology, you cannot tell, what first gave motion to the heart; nor what continues it; nor why its motion is less voluntary, than that of the lungs; nor why you are able to move your arm, to the right or left, by a simple volition: you cannot explain the cause of animal heat; nor comprehend the principle, by which your body was at first formed, nor by which it is sustained, nor by which it will be reduced to earth. In natural religion, you cannot comprehend the eternity or omnipresence of the Deity; nor easily understand, how his prescience can be consistent with your freedom, or his immutability with his government of moral agents; nor why he did not make all his creatures equally perfect; nor why he did not create them sooner: In short, you cannot look into any branch of knowledge, but you will meet with subjects above your comprehension. The fall and the redemption of human kind, are not more incomprehensible, than the creation and the conservation of the universe; the infinite author of the works of providence, and of nature, is equally inscrutable, equally past our finding out in them both. And it is somewhat remarkable, that the deepest inquirers into nature, have ever thought with most reverence, and spoken with most confidence, concerning those things, which

in revealed religion, may seem hard to be understood; they have ever avoided that self-sufficiency of knowledge, which springs from ignorance, produces indifference, and ends in infidelity. Admirable to this purpose, is the reflection of the greatest mathematician of the present age, when he is combating an opinion of Newton's, by an hypothesis of his own, still less defensible than that which he opposes:—*Tous les jours que je vois de ces esprits-forts, qui critiquent les vérités de notre religion, et s'en moquent même avec la plus impertinente suffisance, je pense, chetifs mortels! combien et combien des choses sur lesquels vous raisonnez si légèrement, sont elles plus sublimes, et plus élevés, que celles sur lesquelles le grand Newton s'égare si grossièrement.*

Plato mentions a set of men, who were very ignorant, and thought themselves supremely wise; and who rejected the argument for the being of a God, derived from the harmony and order of the universe, as old and trite; there have been men, it seems, in all ages, who, in affecting singularity, have overlooked truth: an argument, however, is not the worse for being old; and surely it would have been a more just mode of reasoning, if you had examined the external evidence for the truth of Christianity, weighed the old arguments from miracles, and from prophecies, before you had rejected the whole account from the difficulties you met with in it. You would laugh at an Indian, who in peeping into a history of England, and meeting with the mention of the Thames being frozen, or of a shower of hail, or of snow, should throw the book aside, as unworthy of his further notice, from his want of ability to comprehend these phenomena.

In considering the argument from miracles, you will soon be convinced, that it is possible for God to work miracles; and you will be convinced, that it is as possible for human testimony to establish the truth of miraculous, as of physical or historical events; but before you can be convinced that the miracles in question are supported by such testimony as deserves to be credited, you must inquire at what period, and by what persons, the books of the Old and New Testament were composed; if you reject the account, without making this examination, you reject it from prejudice, not from reason.

There is, however, a short method of examining this argument, which may, perhaps, make as great an impression on your minds, as any other. Three men of distinguished abilities, rose up at different times, and attacked Christianity with every objection which their malice could suggest, or their learning could devise; but neither Celsus in the second century, nor Porphyry in the third, nor the emperor Julian himself in the fourth century, ever questioned the reality of the miracles related in the gospels. Do but you grant us what these men (who were more likely to know the truth of the matter, than you can be) granted to their adversaries, and we will very readily let you make the most of the magic, to which, as the last wretched shift, they were forced to attribute them. We can find you men, in our days, who from the mixture of two colourless liquors, will produce you a third as red as blood, or of any other colour you desire; et disto citius, by a drop resembling water, will restore the transparency; they will make two fluids coalesce into a solid body; and from the mixture of liquors colder than ice, will instantly raise you a horrid explosion, and a tremendous flame: these, and twenty other tricks they will perform, without having been sent with our Saviour to Egypt to learn magic; nay, with a bottle or two of oil, they will compose the undulations of a lake; and by a little art, they will restore the functions of life to a man, who has been an hour or two under water, or a day or two buried in the snow; but in vain will these men, or the greatest magician that Egypt ever saw, say to a boisterous sea, "Peace, be still;" in vain will they say to a carcass rotting in the grave, "Come forth;" the winds and the sea will not obey them, and the putrid carcass will not hear them. You need not suffer yourselves to be deprived of the weight of this argument; from its having been observed, that the Fathers have acknowledged the supernatural part of Paganism; since the Fathers were in no condition to detect a cheat, which was supported both by the disposition of the people, and the power of the civil magistrate; and they were, from that inability, forced to attribute to infernal agency what was too cunningly contrived to be detected, and contrived for too impious a purpose, to be credited as the word of God.

With

With respect to prophecy, you may, perhaps, have accustomed yourselves to consider it, as originating in Asiatic enthusiasm, in Chaldean mystery, or in the subtle stratagem of interested priests: and have given yourselves no more trouble concerning the predictions of sacred, than concerning the oracles of Pagan history. Or, if ever you have cast a glance upon this subject, the dissensions of learned men concerning the proper interpretation of the revelation, and other difficult prophecies, may have made you rashly conclude, that all prophecies were equally unintelligible; and more indebted for their accomplishment, to a fortunate concurrence of events, and the pliant ingenuity of the expofitor, than to the inspired foresight of the prophet. In all that the prophets of the Old Testament have delivered, concerning the destruction of particular cities, and the desolation of particular kingdoms, you may see nothing but shrewd conjectures, which any one acquainted with the history of the rise and fall of empires, might certainly have made: and as you would not hold him for a prophet, who should now affirm, that London or Paris would afford to future ages, a spectacle just as melancholy, as that which we now contemplate, with a sigh, in the ruins of Agrigentum or Palmyra; so you cannot persuade yourselves to believe, that the denunciations of the prophets against the haughty cities of Tyre or Babylon, for instance, proceeded from the inspiration of the Deity. There is no doubt, that by some such general kind of reasoning, many are influenced to pay no attention to an argument, which, if properly considered, carries with it the strongest conviction.

Spinoza said, That he would have broken his atheistic system to pieces, and embraced without repugnance the ordinary faith of Christians, if he could have persuaded himself of the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead; and I question not, that there are many disbelievers, who would relinquish their deistic tenets, and receive the gospel, if they could persuade themselves, that God had ever so far interfered in the moral government of the world, as to illumine the mind of any one man with the knowledge of future events. A miracle strikes the senses of the persons who see it, a prophecy addresses itself to the understandings of those

who behold its completion; and it requires, in many cases, some learning, in all some attention, to judge of the correspondence of events with the predictions concerning them. No one can be convinced, that what Jeremiah and the other prophets foretold of the fate of Babylon, that it should be besieged by the Medes; that it should be taken, when her mighty men were drunken, when her springs were dried up; and that it should become a pool of water, and should remain desolate for ever; no one, I say, can be convinced, that all these, and other parts of the prophetic denunciation, have been minutely fulfilled, without spending some time in reading the accounts, which profane historians have delivered down to us concerning its being taken by Cyrus; and which modern travellers have given us of its present situation.

Porphry was so persuaded of the coincidence between the prophecies of Daniel and the events, that he was forced to affirm the prophecies were written after the things prophesied of had happened; another Porphyry has, in our days, been so astonished at the correspondence between the prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, as related by St. Matthew, and the history of that event, as recorded by Josephus; that, rather than embrace Christianity, he has ventured to assert (contrary to the faith of all ecclesiastical history, the opinion of the learned of all ages, and all the rules of good criticism) that St. Matthew wrote his Gospel after Jerusalem had been taken and destroyed by the Romans. You may from these instances perceive the strength of the argument from prophecy; it has not been able indeed to vanquish the prejudices of either the ancient or the modern Porphyry; but it has been able to compel them both, to be guilty of obvious falsehoods, which have nothing but impudent assertions to support them.

Some over-zealous interpreters of scripture have found prophecies in simple narrations, extended real predictions beyond the times and circumstances to which they naturally were applied, and perplexed their readers with a thousand quaint allusions and allegorical conceits; this proceeding has made unthinking men pay less regard to prophecy in general; there are some predictions however, such as those concerning

concerning the present state of the Jewish people, and the corruption of Christianity, which are now fulfilling in the world; and which, if you will take the trouble to examine them, you will find of such an extraordinary nature, that you will not perhaps hesitate to refer them to God as their author; and if you once become persuaded of the truth of any one miracle, or of the completion of any one prophecy, you will resolve all your difficulties (concerning the manner of God's interposition, in the moral government of our species, and the nature of the doctrines contained in revelation) into your own inability fully to comprehend the whole scheme of divine providence.

We are told, however, that the strangeness of the narration, and the difficulty of the doctrines contained in the New Testament, are not the only circumstances which induce you to reject it; you have discovered, you think, so many contradictions, in the accounts which the Evangelists have given of the life of Christ, that you are compelled to consider the whole as an ill-digested and improbable story. You would not reason thus upon any other occasion; you would not reject as fabulous the accounts given by Livy and Polybius of Hannibal and the Carthaginians, though you should discover a difference betwixt them in several points of little importance. You cannot compare the history of the same events as delivered by any two historians, but you will meet with many circumstances, which, though mentioned by one, are either wholly omitted or differently related by the other; and this observation is peculiarly applicable to biographical writings: But no one ever thought of disbelieving the leading circumstances of the lives of Vitellius or Vespasian, because Tacitus and Suetonius did not in every thing correspond in their accounts of these emperors; and if the memoirs of the life and doctrines of M. de Voltaire himself, were some twenty or thirty years after his death, to be delivered to the world by four of his most intimate acquaintance; I do not apprehend that we should discredit the whole account of such an extraordinary man, by reason of some slight inconsistencies and contradictions, which the avowed enemies of his name might chance to discover in the several narrations. Though we should grant you then, that the Evangelists had fallen into some trivial con-

traditions, in what they have related concerning the life of Christ; yet you ought not to draw any other inference from our concession, than that they had not plotted together, as cheats would have done, in order to give an unexceptionable consistency to their fraud. We are not however disposed to make you any such concession; we will rather shew you the futility of your general argument, by touching upon a few of the places, which you think are most liable to your censure.

You observe, that neither Luke, nor Mark, nor John, have mentioned the cruelty of Herod in murdering the infants of Bethlehem; and that no account is to be found of this matter in Josephus, who wrote the life of Herod; and therefore the fact recorded by Matthew is not true. —The concurrent testimony of many independent writers concerning a matter of fact, unquestionably adds to its probability; but if nothing is to be received as true, upon the testimony of a single author, we must give up some of the best writers, and disbelieve some of the most interesting facts of ancient history.

According to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, there was only an interval of three months, you say, between the baptism and crucifixion of Jesus; from which time, taking away the forty days of temptation, there will only remain about six weeks for the whole period of his public ministry; which lasted however, according to St. John, at the least above three years. —Your objection fairly stated stands thus; Matthew, Mark, and Luke, in writing the history of Jesus Christ, mention the several events of his life, as following one another in continued succession, without taking notice of the times in which they happened; but is it a just conclusion from their silence, to infer that there really were no intervals of time between the transactions which they seem to have connected? Many instances might be produced from the most admired biographers of antiquity, in which the events are related, as immediately consequent to each other, which did not happen but at very distant periods: we have an obvious example of this manner of writing in St. Matthew; who connects the preaching of John the Baptist with the return of Joseph from Egypt, though we are certain, that the latter event preceded the former by a great many years.

John

John has said nothing of the institution of the Lord's supper; the other Evangelists have said nothing of the washing of the disciples' feet:—What then? are you not ashamed to produce these facts, as instances of contradiction? if omissions are contradictions, look into the history of the age of Louis the Fourteenth, or into the general history of M. de Voltaire; and you will meet with a great abundance of contradictions.

John, in mentioning the discourse which Jesus had with his mother and his beloved disciple, at the time of his crucifixion, says, that she, with Mary Magdalene, stood near the cross; Matthew, on the other hand, says, that Mary Magdalene and the other women were there, beholding afar off: this you think a manifest contradiction; and scoffingly inquire, whether the women and the beloved disciple, which were near the cross, could be the same with those, who stood far from the cross?—It is difficult not to transgress the bounds of moderation and good manners, in answering such sophistry: what! have you to learn, that though the Evangelists speak of the crucifixion, as of one event, it was not accomplished in one instant, but lasted several hours? And why the women, who were at a distance from the cross, might not, during its continuance, draw near the cross; or from being near the cross might not move from the cross, is more than you can explain to either us, or yourselves. And we take from you your only refuge, by denying expressly, that the different Evangelists, in their mention of the women, speak of the same point of time.

The Evangelists, you affirm, are fallen into gross contradictions, in their accounts of the appearances, by which Jesus manifested himself to his disciples, after his resurrection from the dead; for Matthew speaks of two, Mark of three, Luke of two, and John of four. That contradictory propositions cannot be true, is readily granted: and if you will produce the plate, in which Matthew says, that Jesus Christ appeared twice, and no oftener, it will be further granted, that he is contradicted by John, in a very material part of his narration; but till you do that, you must excuse me, if I cannot grant, that the Evangelists have contradicted each other in this point; for to common understandings it is pretty evident, that if Christ

appeared four times, according to John's account, he must have appeared twice, according to that of Matthew and Luke, and thrice, according to that of Mark.

The different Evangelists are not only accused of contradicting each other, but Luke is said to have contradicted himself; for in his gospel he tells us, that Jesus ascended into heaven from Bethany; and in the Acts of the Apostles, of which he is the reputed author, he informs us, that Jesus ascended from Mount Olivet.—Your objection proceeds either from your ignorance of geography, or your ill will to Christianity; and upon either supposition, deserves our contempt: be pleased, however, to remember for the future, that Bethany was not only the name of a town, but of a district of Mount Olivet adjoining to the town.

From this specimen of the contradictions, ascribed to the historians of the life of Christ, you may judge for yourselves, what little reason there is to reject Christianity upon their account; and now sadly you will be imposed upon (in a matter of more consequence to you than any other) if you take every thing for a contradiction, which the uncandid adversaries of Christianity think proper to call one.

Before I put an end to this address, I cannot help taking notice of an argument, by which some philosophers have of late endeavoured to overturn the whole system of revelation: and it is the more necessary to give an answer to their objection, as it is become a common subject of philosophical conversation, especially amongst those who have visited the continent. The objection tends to invalidate, as is supposed, the authority of Moses; by shewing that the earth is much older, than it can be proved to be from his account of the creation, and the scripture chronology. We contend, that six thousand years have not yet elapsed, since the creation; and these philosophers contend, that they have indubitable proof of the earth's being at the least fourteen thousand years old; and they complain, that Moses hangs as a dead weight upon them, and blunts all their zeal for inquiry.

The Canonico Recupero, who, it seems, is engaged in writing the history of mount Etna, has discovered a stratum of lava, which flowed from that mountain, according

cording to his opinion, in the time of the second Punic war, or about two thousand years ago; this stratum is not yet covered with soil, sufficient for the production of either corn or vines; it requires then, says the Canon, two thousand years, at least, to convert a stratum of lava into a fertile field. In sinking a pit near Jaci, in the neighbourhood of Etna, they have discovered evident marks of seven distinct lavas, one under the other; the surfaces of which are parallel, and most of them covered with a thick bed of rich earth; now, the eruption, which formed the lowest of these lavas (if we may be allowed to reason, says the Canon, from analogy,) flowed from the mountain at least fourteen thousand years ago.—It might be briefly answered to this objection, by denying, that there is any thing in the history of Moses repugnant to this opinion concerning the great antiquity of the earth; for though the rise and progress of arts and sciences, and the small multiplication of the human species, render it almost to a demonstration probable, that man has not existed longer upon the surface of this earth, than according to the Mosaic account; yet, that the earth was then created out of nothing, when man was placed upon it, is not, according to the sentiments of some philosophers, to be proved from the original text of sacred scripture; we might, I say, reply, with these philosophers, to this formidable objection of the Canon, by granting it in its fullest extent; we are under no necessity, however, of adopting their opinion, in order to shew the weakness of the Canon's reasoning. For in the first place, the Canon has not satisfactorily established his main fact, that the lava in question, is the identical lava, which Diodorus Siculus mentions to have flowed from Etna, in the second Carthaginian war; and in the second place, it may be observed, that the time necessary for converting the lavas into fertile fields, must be very different, according to the different consistencies of the lavas, and their different situations, with respect to elevation or depression; to their being exposed to winds, rains, and to other circumstances; just as the time, in which the heaps of iron slag (which resembles lava) are covered with verdure, is different at different furnaces, according to the nature of the slag, and situation of the furnace; and something of this kind is deducible from

the account of the Canon himself; since the crevices of this famous stratum are really full of rich, good soil, and have pretty large trees growing in them.

But if all this should be thought not sufficient to remove the objection, I will produce the Canon an analogy, in opposition to his analogy, and which is grounded on more certain facts. Etna and Vesuvius resemble each other, in the causes which produce their eruptions, and in the nature of their lavas, and in the time necessary to mellow them into soil fit for vegetation; or if there be any slight difference in this respect, it is probably not greater than what subsists between different lavas of the same mountain. This being admitted, which no philosopher will deny, the Canon's analogy will prove just nothing at all, if we can produce an instance of seven different lavas (with interjacent strata of vegetable earth) which have flowed from mount Vesuvius, within the space, not of fourteen thousand, but of somewhat less than seventeen hundred years; for then, according to our analogy, a stratum of lava may be covered with vegetable soil, in about two hundred and fifty years, instead of requiring two thousand for the purpose. The eruption of Vesuvius, which destroyed Herculaneum and Pompeii, is rendered still more famous by the death of Pliny, recorded by his nephew, in his letter to Tacitus; this event happened in the year 79; it is not yet then quite seventeen hundred years, since Herculaneum was swallowed up: but we are informed by unquestionable authority, that the matter which covers the ancient town of Herculaneum, is not the produce of one eruption only; for there are evident marks, that the matter of six eruptions has taken its course over that which lies immediately above the town, and was the cause of its destruction. These strata are either of lava or burnt matter, with veins of good soil betwixt them.—I will not add another word upon this subject; except that the bishop of the diocese, was not much out in his advice to Canonico Recupero, to take care, not to make his mountain older than Moses; though it would have been full as well, to have shut his mouth with a reason, as to have stopped it with the dread of an ecclesiastical censure.

You perceive, with what ease a little attention will remove a great difficulty; but

Had we been able to say nothing, in explanation of this phenomenon, we should not have acted a very rational part, in making our ignorance the foundation of our infidelity, or suffering a minute philosopher to rob us of our religion.

Your objections to revelation, may be numerous; you may find fault with the account, which Moses has given of the creation and the fall; you may not be able to get water enough for an universal deluge; nor room enough in the ark of Noah, for all the different kinds of aerial and terrestrial animals; you may be dissatisfied with the command for sacrificing of Isaac, for plundering the Egyptians, and for extirpating the Canaanites; you may find fault with the Jewish œconomy, for its ceremonies, its sacrifices, and its multiplicity of priests; you may object to the imprecations in the Psalms, and think the immoralities of David, a fit subject for dramatic ridicule; you may look upon the partial promulgation of Christianity, as an insuperable objection to its truth; and waywardly reject the goodness of God toward yourselves, because you do not comprehend, how you have deserved it more than others; you may know nothing of the entrance of sin and death into the world, by one man's transgression; nor be able to comprehend the doctrine of the cross and of redemption by Jesus Christ; in short, if your mind is so disposed, you may find food for your scepticism in every page of the Bible, as well as in every appearance of nature; and it is not in the power of any person, but yourselves, to clear up your doubts; you must read, and you must think for yourselves; and you must do both with temper, with candour, and with care. Infidelity is a rank weed; it is nurtured by our vices, and cannot be plucked up as easily as it may be planted: your difficulties, with respect to revelation, may have first arisen, from your own reflection on the religious indifference of those, whom, from your earliest infancy, you have been accustomed to revere and imitate; domestic irreligion may have made you willing hearers of libertine conversation; and the uniform prejudices of the world, may have finished the business at a very early age; and left you to wander through life without a principle to direct your conduct, and to die without hope. We are far from wishing you to trust the word of the clergy for the truth of your re-

ligion; we beg of you to examine it to the bottom, to try it, to prove it, and not to hold it fast unless you find it good. Till you are disposed to undertake this task, it becomes you to consider with great seriousness and attention, whether it can be for your interest to esteem a few witty sarcasms, or metaphysical subtleties, or ignorant misrepresentations, or unwarranted assertions, as unanswerable arguments against revelation; and a very slight reflection will convince you, that it will certainly be for your reputation, to employ the flippancy of your rhetoric, and the poignancy of your ridicule, upon any subject, rather than upon the subject of religion.

I take my leave with recommending to your notice, the advice which Mr. Locke gave to a young man, who was desirous of becoming acquainted with the doctrines of the Christian religion. 'Study the holy scripture, especially the New Testament: Therein are contained the words of eternal life. It has God for its author; Salvation for its end; and Truth without any mixture of error for its matter.'

Bishop Watson.

§ 201. *Mistakes in judging of the Scripture style, &c.*

The books of the Old Testament, which were written by the divine will and inspiration, were by the Jews of old usually divided into three several classes, whereof the first comprehended the five books of Moses; the second, all the prophets; and the third, those writings which they called Chetubim, the Greeks Hagiographa; or books that were written by holy men, but not with such fulness of spirit as to be ranked among the prophets. In this division they reckoned five books in the first class; eight in the second; and nine in the third; in all two-and-twenty; according to the number of the letters of their alphabet, and as fully comprehending all that was necessary to be known and believed, as the number of their letters did all that was requisite to be said or written; for in this method it is that they range them.

The books of Moses.	{	Genesis.
		Exodus.
		Leviticus.
		Numbers.
		Deuteronomy.

Four books of the former prophets.

4.

Four books of the latter prophets.

4.

And the rest of the holy writers.

9.

Joshua.
Judges, and Ruth.
Samuel 1. and 2.
Kings 1. and 2.
Isaiah.
Jeremiah, and his Lamentations.
Ezekiel.
The books of the 12 lesser prophets.
King David's Psalms.
King Solomon's Proverbs.
His Ecclesiastes.
His Song of Songs.
The book of Job.
The book of Daniel.
The book of Ezra and Nehemiah.
The book of Esther.
The book of Chronicles 1. and 2.

But be the books ever so genuine, and their tradition ever so certain, yet we cannot suppose them wrote by persons divinely inspired, so long as we see in them certain characters inconsistent with such a supposition. Surely the purest language, the most perfect style, the greatest clearness, the most exact method, the soundest reasoning, the man of apparent consistency, and, in a word, all the excellencies of good writing, might be expected in a piece composed or dictated by the Spirit of God; but books wherein we find the reverse of all this, it is idle, if not impious, to ascribe to the Deity.

I. One great mistake which the generality of readers run into, is, to judge of the composition of the Scripture, not from its original, but from its translations: for, besides that in ancient writings, such as the Bible is, there are allusions to many rites and customs that are now laid aside; and, for this reason, must needs seem flat or impertinent; which, when they were in use, had a great deal of spirit and propriety in them; and besides that the Hebrew, in particular, is a language of a peculiar cast, both in the contexture of its words, and the cadence of its periods, and contains certain expressions, whose emphasis can no more be translated into another language, than the water of a diamond can be painted, without detracting from the original: besides all this, I say, the translators themselves, sometimes by running into mistakes, and at all times by adhering too religiously to the letter of the text, have contributed not a little to make the style of the Sacred Writings appear less advantageous. For, whereas other

translators have taken a liberty to accommodate the beauties of the language whereinto they translate, to the idioms of that wherein their author wrote; these have thought themselves restrained from using such freedom in a divine composition; and have therefore left several Hebraic, and other foreign phrases in their version, which seem a little uncouth, and give the reader, who can look no farther, a very odd notion of the original: though it is certainly manifest, that the most elegant piece of oratory that ever was framed, if we render it literally, and not give it the true genius of the language whereunto we are admitting it, will lose all its beauty, and appear with the same disadvantage.

II. Another mistake that we run into, is, when we confine eloquence to any nation, and account that the only proof of it, which is accommodated to the present taste. We indeed, in these European countries, whose languages, in a great measure, are derived from Greek and Latin, make them the patterns for our imitation, and account them the standard of perfection: but there is no reason why the eastern nations, whose languages have no affinity with them, should do the same; much less is it reasonable to expect it in writers who lived long before these Greek or Latin authors, we so much admire, were born. It is sufficient for them that they wrote according to the fashionable, and esteemed eloquence of their own times: but that the Holy Ghost should inspire with certain schemes of speech, adapted to the modern taste, and such as were utterly unknown in the countries where they lived, is a thing that

that can never enter into any sober man's consideration. The truth is, since Moses was bred up in all the refined learning and wisdom of the Egyptians; since Solomon was excellent in all kind of knowledge, and in a manner idolized by the eastern world; and since Daniel's promising youth was improved by the learning of the Chaldean sages; we have all the reason imaginable to believe, that they wrote according to the perfection of style which was then in use; that though their eloquence differs from ours, yet it is excellent in its kind; and that, if we have other notions of it, it is only because we are unacquainted with those bold allegories, and figurative ways of discourse; those dark sentences, surprising brevities, and inconnected transitions, wherein the nature of their true sublimity did consist.

III. Another mistake we run into is, when we suppose that the critical rules of eloquence are any ways necessary in divine compositions. The design of God, in recording his laws, was to inform our understandings, to cure our passions, and rectify our wills; and if this end be but attained, it is no great matter in what form of diction the prescription be given. We never expect that a physician's receipt should be wrote in a Ciceronian style: and if a lawyer has made us a firm conveyance of an estate, we never inquire what elegancies there are in the writing. When, therefore, God intends to do us far greater things than these; when he is delivering the terms of our salvation, and prescribing the rules of our duty; why should we expect that he should insist on the niceties of style and expression, and not rather account it a diminution of his authority, to be elaborate in trifles, when he has the momentous issues of another life to command our attention, and affect our passions? In some of the greatest works of nature, God has not confined himself to any such order and exactness. The stars, we see, are not cast into regular figures; lakes and rivers are not bounded by straight lines; nor are hills and mountains exact cones or pyramids. When a mighty prince declares his will by laws and edicts to his subjects, is he, do we think, careful at all about a pure style, or elegant composition? Is not the phrase thought proper enough, if it conveys as much as was intended? And would not the fine strains of some modern critics be thought pedantic and affected on

such occasions? Why then should we expect in the Oracles of God an exactness that would be unbecoming, and beneath the dignity of an earthly monarch, and which bears no proportion or resemblance to the magnificent works of the creation? A strict observation of the rules of grammar and rhetoric, in elegant expressions, harmonious periods, and technical definitions and partitions, may gratify indeed some readers; but then it must be granted that these things have the air of human contrivance in them; whereas in the simple, unaffected, artless, unequal, bold, figurative style of the Holy Scriptures, there is a character singularly great and majestic, and what looks more like divine inspiration, than any other form of composition.

These observations being premised, if we should now consider the nature of eloquence in general, as it is defined by Aristotle to be a faculty of persuasion, which Cicero makes to consist in three things, instructing, delighting, and moving our readers or hearers mind, we shall find that the Holy Scriptures have a fair claim to these several properties.

For where can we meet with such a plain representation of things, in point of history, and such cogent arguments, in point of precept, as this one volume furnishes us with? Where is there an history written more simply and naturally, and at the same time more nobly and loftily, than that of the creation of the world? Where are the great lessons of morality taught with such force and perspicuity (except in the sermons of Christ, and the writings of the apostles) as in the book of Deuteronomy? Where is the whole compass of devotion, in the several forms of confession, petition, supplication, thanksgiving, vows, and praises, so punctually taught us, as in the book of Psalms? Where are the rules of wisdom and prudence so convincingly laid down, as in the Proverbs of Solomon, and the choice sentences of Ecclesiastes? Where is vice and impiety of all kinds more justly displayed, and more fully confuted, than in the threats and admonitions of the prophets? And what do the little warmth, which may be raised in the fancy by an artificial composition and vehemence of style, signify in comparison of those strong impulses and movements which the Holy Scriptures make upon good men's souls, when they represent the fright-
ful

ful justice of an angry God to stubborn offenders, and the bowels of his compassion, and unspeakable kindness, to all true penitents and faithful servants?

The Holy Scripture indeed has none of those flashy ornaments of speech, where-with human compositions so plentifully abound; but then it has a sufficient stock of real and peculiar beauties to recommend it. To give one instance for all out of the history of Joseph and his family: the whole relation indeed is extremely natural: but the manner of his discovering himself to his brethren is inimitable. "And Joseph could no longer refrain himself—but, lifting up his voice with tears, said—I am Joseph—doth my father yet live?—And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said to his brethren, come near me, I pray you: and they came near, and he said I am Joseph—your brother—whom ye sold into Egypt." Nothing certainly can be a more lively description of Joseph's tender respect for his father, and love for his brethren: and, in like manner, when his brethren returned, and told their father in what splendor and glory his son Joseph lived, it is said, "that Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not; but when he saw the waggons which Joseph had sent for him, the spirit of Jacob, their father, revived; and Israel said, it is enough—Joseph my son is yet alive—I will go—and see him—before I die." Here is such a contrast of different passions, of utter despondency, dawning hope, and confirmed faith, triumphant joy, and paternal affection, as no orator in the world could express more movingly, in a more easy manner, or shorter compass of words.

Nay more, had I leisure to gratify the curious, I might easily shew, that those very figures and schemes of speech, which are so much admired in profane authors, as their great beauties and ornaments, are no where more conspicuous than in the sacred.

One figure, for instance, esteemed very florid among the masters of art, is, when all the members of a period begin with the same word. The figure is called anaphora; and yet (if I mistake not) the 15th psalm affords us a very beautiful passage of this kind. "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly; he that back-biteth not with his

tongue; he that maketh much of them that fear the Lord; he that sweareth to his hurt, and changeth not; he that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that does these things shall never be moved."

The ancient orators took a great deal of pride in ranging finely their antitheta. Cicero is full of this, and uses it many times to a degree of affectation; and yet I cannot find any place wherein he has surpassed that passage of the prophet. "He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood." But above all other figures, that whereon poets and orators love chiefly to dwell, is the hypotyposis, or lively description; and yet we shall hardly find in the best classic authors, any thing comparable, in this regard, to the Egyptians' destruction in the Red Sea, related in the song of Moses and Miriam; to the description of the Leviathan in Job; to the descent of God, and a storm at sea in the Psalmist; to the intrigues of an adulterous woman in the Proverbs; to the pride of the Jewish ladies in Isaiah; and to the plague of locusts in Joel; which is represented like the ravaging of a country; and storming a city by an army: "A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness, and nothing shall escape them. Before their face people shall be pained; all faces shall gather blackness. They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; they shall march every one in his way, and they shall not break their ranks. They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall; they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter into the windows as a thief." The description is more remarkable, because the analogy is carried quite throughout without straining, and the whole processes of a conquering army in the manner of their march, their destroying the provision, and burning the country, in their scaling the walls, breaking into houses, and running about the vanquished city, are fully delineated and set before our eyes.

From these few examples (for it would be endless to proceed in instances of this kind) it appears, that the Holy Bible is far from being defective in point of eloquence; and (what is a peculiar commendation of it) its style is full of a grateful

variety; sometimes majestic as becomes that "high and holy one who inhabiteth eternity;" sometimes so low as to answer the other part of his character, "who dwelleth with him that is of an humble spirit;" and, at all times so proper, and adapted so well to the several subjects it treats of, that whoever considers it attentively will perceive, in the narrative parts of it, a strain so simple and unaffected; in the prophetic and devotional, something so animated and sublime; and in the doctrinal and preceptive, such an air of dignity and authority, as seems to speak its original divine.

We allow indeed, that method is an excellent art, highly conducive to the clearness and perspicuity of discourse; but then we affirm, that it is an art of modern invention in comparison to the times when the sacred penmen wrote, and incompatible with the manner of writing which was then in vogue. We indeed in Europe, who, in this matter, have taken our examples from Greece, can hardly read any thing with pleasure that is not digested into order, and sorted under proper heads; but the eastern nations, who were used to a free way of discourse, and never cramped their notions by methodical limitations, would have despised a composition of this kind, as much as we do a school-boy's theme, with all the formalities of its exordiums, ratios, and confirmations. And, if this was no precedent for other nations, much less can we think, that God Almighty's methods ought to be confined to human laws, which, being designed for the narrowness of our conceptions, might be improper and injurious to his, whose "thoughts are as far above ours, as the heavens are higher than the earth."

The truth is, inspiration is, in some measure, the language of another world, and carries in it the reasoning of spirits, which, without controversy, is vastly different from ours. We indeed, to make things lie plain before our understandings, are forced to sort them out into distinct partitions, and consider them by little and little, that so at last, by gradual advances, we may come to a tolerable conception of them; but this is no argument for us to think that pure spirits do reason after this manner. Their understandings are quick and intuitive: they see the whole compass of rational inferences at once; and have no need of those little methodical distinc-

tions which oftentimes help the imperfections of our intellects. Now, though we do not assert, that the language of the Holy Scriptures is an exact copy of the reasoning of the spiritual world; yet, since they came by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, it is but reasonable to expect that they should preserve some small relish of it; as books translated into another tongue always retain some marks of their originals. And hence it comes to pass, that though the Holy Ghost does vouchsafe to speak in the language of men, yet, in his divine compositions, there are some traces to be found of that bold and unlimited ratiocination which is peculiar to the heavenly inhabitants, whose noble and flaming thoughts are never clogged with the cold and jejune laws of human method.

Stackhouse.

§ 202. *A Prayer or Psalm.*

Most gracious Lord God, my merciful Father; from my youth up, my Creator, my Redeemer, my Comforter. Thou, O Lord, soundest and searchest the depths and secrets of all hearts; thou acknowledgest the upright of heart; thou judgest the hypocrite; thou ponderest men's thoughts and doings as in a balance; thou measurest their intentions as with a line; vanity and crooked ways cannot be hid from thee.

Remember, O Lord, how thy servant hath walked before thee; remember what I have first sought, and what hath been principal in my intentions. I have loved thy assemblies, I have mourned for the divisions of thy church, I have delighted in the brightness of thy sanctuary. This vine, which thy right hand hath planted in this nation, I have ever prayed unto thee, that it might have the first and the latter rain, and that it might stretch her branches to the seas and to the floods. The state and bread of the poor and oppressed have been precious in mine eyes; I have hated all cruelty and hardness of heart; I have (though in a despised weed) procured the good of all men. If any have been my enemies, I thought not of them, neither hath the sun almost set upon my displeasures, but I have been as a dove, free from superfluity of maliciousness. Thy creatures have been my books, but thy Scriptures much more. I have sought thee in the courts, fields, and gardens; but I have found thee in thy temples.

Thousands

Thousands have been my sins, and ten thousands my transgressions, but thy sanctifications have remained with me, and my heart (through thy grace) hath been an unquenched coal upon thine altar.

O Lord, my strength! I have since my youth met with thee in all my ways, by thy fatherly compassions, by thy comfortable chastisements, and by thy most visible providence. As thy favours have increased upon me, so have thy corrections; so as thou hast been always near me, O Lord! And ever as my worldly blessings were exalted, so secret darts from thee have pierced me; and when I have ascended before men, I have descended in humiliation before thee. And now, when I thought most of peace and honour, thy hand is heavy upon me, and hath humbled me according to thy former loving-kindness, keeping me still in thy fatherly school, not as a bastard, but as a child. Just are thy judgments upon me for my sins, which are more in number than the sands of the sea, but have no proportion to thy mercies; for what are the sands of the sea? Earth, heavens, and all these, are nothing to thy mercies. Besides my innumerable sins, I confess before thee, that I am a debtor to thee for the gracious talent of thy gifts and graces, which I have neither put into a napkin, nor put it, as I ought, to exchangers, where it might have made best profit, but mis-spent it in things for which I was least fit; so I may truly say, my soul hath been a stranger in the course of my pilgrimage. Be merciful unto me, O Lord, for my Saviour's sake, and receive me into thy bosom, or guide me into thy ways.

Lord Bacon.

§ 203. *The doctrine of Christ a doctrine of truth and simplicity.*

The Gospel of Christ, as taught by himself and his apostles, in its original plainness and purity, is a doctrine of truth and simplicity, a doctrine so easy to be understood, so reasonable to be practised, so agreeable to the natural notions and reason of mankind, so beneficial in its effects, if men were really governed by it; teaching them nothing but the worship of the true God; through the mediation of Christ; and towards each other, justice, righteousness, meekness, charity, and universal good-will; in expectation of a future judgment, and of a lasting state of happiness in a better world, for them who love God and keep his commandments;

this doctrine of Christ, I say, in its native simplicity and purity, is so reasonable, so excellent, and of such irresistible evidence, that had it never been corrupted by superstitions from within, it never could have been opposed by power from without; but it must of necessity have captivated mankind to the obedience of faith; 'till the knowledge of the Lord had filled the earth, as the waters cover the sea.—

Whatever difficulties there may be in some of the historical, or prophetic, or controversial parts of the books of Scripture, yet as to the practical part, the duties required of a Christian in order to salvation, there is no man that ever read the sermons of Christ and his apostles, or ever heard them read, but understood perfectly well what our Saviour meant by commanding us to worship the one true God of nature, the Author and Lord of the universe, and to do to all men as we would they should do to us; and that, "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world;" in expectation of being righteously and impartially adjudged, according to our works, to a state of happiness or misery in the world to come; by our Saviour himself, our merciful and compassionate judge. There never was any man in the christian world, but felt the reasonableness and importance of this doctrine; and, whenever these things have been repeated to him, was immediately conscious to himself, either of having followed or transgressed these precepts.

Dr. Clark.

§ 204. *On the superiority of Sacred History and Christian Philosophy.*

In the histories which have been left us by men, we see nothing but the agency of man. They are men who obtain the victories, who take towns, who subdue kingdoms, who dethrone sovereigns, to elevate themselves to the supreme power: God appears in no part, men are the sole actors of all these things. But in the history of the Holy Books it is God alone who performs the whole; God alone causeth kings to reign, placeth them upon their thrones, or deposeth them again. It is God alone who opposeth the enemy, who sacks towns, who disposeth of kingdoms and empires, who giveth peace or exciteth war: God alone appeareth in this Sacred History: it is he, if I may so speak; who is the sole hero. The kings and the conquerors of the

the earth appear but as the ministers of his will. In short, these Divine Books unfold the ways of Providence. God, who conceals himself in the other events recorded in our histories, seems to reveal himself in these: and it is in this book alone that we ought to learn to read the other histories which men have left us.

The Holy Books which have preserved religion to our times, contain the first monuments of the origin of things. They are more ancient than all the fabulous productions of the human mind, which have since, in so melancholy a manner, amused the credulity of the following ages. And as error always springs from truth, and is a corrupt imitation of it, it is in the principal actions of this Divine History, that the fables of Paganism find their foundation; so that one may say, there is no error which pays not thereby homage to the antiquity and authority of our Sacred Writings.

The sincerity of Moses appears in the simplicity of his history. He used no precautions to gain credit, because he supposes those for whom he wrote were not destitute of faith, and because he relates none but facts which were publicly known, to preserve the memory of them rather among their descendants, than to instruct that generation in the nature of them.

He concealeth not in a mysterious manner the holy books from the people, lest they should discover the falsehood of them, like as the vain oracles of the Sybils were laid up with care in the Capitol, which was built to keep up the pride of the Romans, exposed to the eyes of the priests alone, and produced from time to time by fragments to justify to the minds of the people, either a dangerous enterprize, or an unjust war. Here the prophetic books were daily read by a whole people; the young and old, the women and children, the priests and the common people, the kings and subjects, were bound without ceasing to have them in their hands; every one had right to study their duty, and to discover their hopes there. Far from flattering their pride, they declared fully the ingratitude of their fathers; they announced in every page their misfortunes to be the just chastisement of their crimes; they reproached kings with their lewdness; priests with their injustice; the great with their profusion; the people with their inconstancy and infidelity, and this notwithstanding these holy books were dear

to them; and by the oracles which they saw there to be accomplished every day, they waited with confidence the fulfilment of those of which all the world at this day are the witnesses.—

There is a nobleness, and an elevation in the maxims of the Gospel, to which mean and grovelling minds cannot attain. The religion which forms great souls, appears to be made only for them: and in order to be great, or to become so, there is a necessity of being a Christian.—

Philosophy discovered the shame of the passions; but she did not teach how to conquer them: her pompous precepts were rather the eulogium of virtue, than the remedy of vice. It was even necessary for the glory and triumph of religion, that the greatest geniusses, and all the power of human reason should have exhausted themselves, in order to render men virtuous. If the Socrateses and the Platos, had not been teachers of the world before Jesus Christ, and had not in vain attempted to regulate manners, and correct men by the sole force of reason, man might have been able to do honour by his virtue to the superiority of reason, or the beauty of virtue itself: but these preachers of wisdom did not make wise men; and it was necessary that the vain efforts of philosophy should prepare new triumphs for grace.

In short, it was religion, which exhibited to the world the true wise man, so long since announced to us, by all the pomp and parade of human reason. She has not limited all her glory, like philosophy, to the essay of hardly forming one sage in a century amongst men: she hath peopled with them cities, empires, deserts; and the whole universe has been to her another Lyceum, where in the midst of public places she hath preached wisdom to all mankind. It is not only amongst the most polite nations that she hath chosen her wise men: the Greek and Barbarian, the Roman and Scythian, hath been equally called to her divine philosophy: it is not only for the learned that she hath reserved the sublime knowledge of her mysteries; the simple have prophesied as well as the sage; and the ignorant themselves have become her doctors and apostles. It was necessary that the true wisdom should become the wisdom of all men.

But further still: her doctrine was foolishness in appearance; and yet, the philosophers submitted their proud reason to this holy folly: she announced nothing but

crosses

crosses and sufferings; and yet the Cæsars became her disciples. She alone came to teach mankind that chastity, humility, temperance might be seated on the throne, and that the seat of the passions and of pleasures, might become the seat of virtue and innocence. What a glory was this for religion. *Massillon, Bishop of Clermont.*

§ 205. *The Light of Reason imperfect.*

If the glorious light of the Gospel be sometimes overcast with clouds of doubt, so is the light of our reason too. But shall we deprive ourselves of the advantage of either, because those clouds cannot perhaps be entirely removed while we remain in this mortal life? Shall we obstinately and frowardly shut our eyes against that day-spring from on high that has visited us, because we are not as yet able to bear the full blaze of his beams? Indeed, not even in heaven itself, not in the highest state of perfection to which a finite being can ever attain, will all the counsels of Providence, all the height and the depth of the infinite wisdom of God, be ever disclosed or understood. Faith, even then, will be necessary; and there will be mysteries which cannot be penetrated by the most exalted arch-angel, and truths which cannot be known by him otherwise than from revelation, or believed upon any other ground of assent than a submissive confidence in the divine wisdom. What, then, shall man presume that his weak and narrow understanding is sufficient to guide him into all truth, without any need of revelation or faith? Shall he complain that the ways of God are not like his ways, and past his finding out? True philosophy, as well as true Christianity, would teach us a wiser and modest part. It would teach us to be content within those bounds which God has assigned to us, "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

Lord Littleton.

§ 206. *The simplicity of the Sacred Writers.*

I cannot forbear taking notice of one other mark of integrity which appears in all the compositions of the sacred writers, and particularly the Evangelists; and that is, the simple, unaffected, unornamental, and unostentatious manner, in which they deliver truths so important and sublime, and facts so magnificent and wonderful, as are capable, one would think, of

lighting up a flame of oratory, even in the dullest and coldest breasts. They speak of an angel descending from heaven to foretell the miraculous conception of Jesus; of another proclaiming his birth, attended by a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, "and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men;" of his star appearing in the East; of angels ministering to him in the wilderness; of his glory in the mount; of a voice twice heard from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son;" of innumerable miracles performed by him, and by his disciples in his name; of his knowing the thoughts of men; of his foretelling future events; of prodigies accompanying his crucifixion and death; of an angel descending in terrors, opening his sepulchre, and frightening away the soldiers who were set to guard it; of his rising from the dead, ascending into heaven, and pouring down, according to his promise, the various and miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit upon his apostles and disciples. All these amazing incidents do these inspired historians relate nakedly and plainly, without any of the colourings and heightenings of rhetoric, or so much as a single note of admiration; without making any comment or remark upon them, or drawing from them any conclusion in honour either of their master or themselves, or to the advantage of the religion they preached in his name; but contenting themselves with relating the naked truth, whether it seems to make for them or against them; without either magnifying on the one hand, or palliating on the other, they leave their cause to the unbiased judgment of mankind, seeking, like genuine apostles of the Lord of truth, to convince rather than to persuade; and therefore coming, as St. Paul speaks of his preaching, "not with excellency of speech, — not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but with demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, that," adds he, "your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." And let it be remembered that he, who speaks this, wanted not learning, art or eloquence, as is evident from his speeches recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, and from the testimony of that great critic Longinus, who, in reckoning up the Grecian orators, places among them Paul of Tarsus; and surely, had they been left solely to the suggestions and guidance of human wisdom,

wisdom, they would not have failed to lay hold on such topics, as the wonders of their master's life, and the transcendent purity and perfection of the noble, generous, benevolent morality contained in his precepts, furnished them with. These topics, I say, greater than ever Tully, or Demosthenes, or Plato, were possessed of, mere human wisdom would doubtless have prompted them to make use of, in order to recommend, in the strongest manner, the religion of Jesus Christ to mankind, by turning their attention to the divine part of his character, and hiding, as it were, in a blaze of heavenly light and glory, his infirmities, his sufferings, and his death. And had they upon such topics as these, and in such a cause, called into their assistance all the arts of composition, rhetoric, and logic, who would have blamed them for it? Not those persons, I presume, who, dazzled and captivated with the glittering ornaments of human wisdom, make a mock at the simplicity of the Gospel, and think it wit to ridicule the style and language of the Holy Scriptures. But the all-wise Spirit of God, by whom these sacred writers were guided into all truth, thought fit to direct or permit them to proceed in a different method; a method, however, very analagous to that, in which he hath been pleased to reveal himself to us in the great book of nature, the stupendous frame of the universe; all whose wonders he hath judged it sufficient to lay before us in silence, and expects from our observations the proper comments and deductions, which, having endued us with reason, he hath enabled us to make. And though a careless and superficial spectator may fancy he perceives even in this fair volume many inconsistencies, defects, and superfluities; yet to a diligent, unprejudiced, and rational enquirer, who will take pains to examine the laws, consider and compare the several parts, and regard their use and tendency, with reference to the whole design of this amazing structure, as far as his short abilities can carry him, there will appear, in those instances which he is capable of knowing, such evident characters of wisdom, goodness, and power, as will leave him no room to doubt of their author, or to suspect that in those particulars which he hath not examined, or to a thorough knowledge of which he cannot perhaps attain, there is nothing but folly, weakness, and malignity. The same thing might be said of the written book, the second vo-

lume, if I may so speak, of the revelation of God, the Holy Scriptures. For as in the first, so also in this are there many passages, that to a cursory, unobserving reader appear idle, unconnected, unaccountable, and inconsistent with those marks of truth, wisdom, justice, mercy, and benevolence, which in others are so visible, that the most careless and inattentive cannot but discern them. And even these, many of them, at least, will often be found, upon a closer and stricter examination, to accord and coincide with the other more plain and more intelligible passages, and to be no heterogeneous parts of one and the same wise and harmonious composition. In both indeed, in the natural as well as the moral book of God, there are, and ever will be, many difficulties, which the wit of man may never be able to resolve; but will a wise philosopher, because he cannot comprehend every thing he sees, reject for that reason all the truths that lie within his reach, and let a few inexplicable difficulties over-balance the many plain and infallible evidences of the finger of God, which appear in all parts, both of his created and written works? Or will he presume so far upon his own wisdom, as to say, God ought to have expressed himself more clearly? The point and exact degree of clearness, which will equally suit the different capacities of men in different ages and countries, will, I believe, be found more difficult to fix than is imagined; since what is clear to one man in a certain situation of mind, time, and place, will inevitably be obscure to another, who views it in other positions, and under other circumstances. How various and even contradictory are the readings and comments, which several men, in the several ages and climates of the world, have made upon nature! And yet her characters are equally legible, and her laws equally intelligible, in all times and in all places: "There is no speech nor language where her voice is not heard: her sound is gone out through all the earth, and her words to the end of the world." All these misrepresentations therefore, and misconstructions, of her works, are chargeable only upon mankind, who have set themselves to study them with various degrees of capacity, application, and impartiality. The question then should be, Why hath God given men such various talents? And not, Why hath not God expressed himself more clearly?

clearly? And the answer to this question, as far as it concerns man to know, is, that God will require of him according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not. If what is necessary for all to know, is knowable by all; those men, upon whom God hath been pleased to bestow capacities and faculties superior to the vulgar, have certainly no just reason to complain of his having left them materials for the exercise of those talents, which, if all things were equally plain to all men, would be of no great advantage to the possessors. If, therefore, there are in the sacred writings, as well as in the works of nature, many passages hard to be understood, it were to be wished, that the wise and learned, instead of being offended at them, and teaching others to be so too, would be persuaded, that both God and man expect that they would set themselves to consider and examine them carefully and impartially, and with a sincere desire of discovering and embracing the truth, not with an arrogant unphilosophical conceit of their being already sufficiently wise and knowing. And then I doubt not but most of these objections to revelation, which are now urged with the greatest confidence, would be cleared up and removed, like those formerly made to Creation, and the Being and Providence of God, by those most ignorant, most absurd, and yet most self-sufficient pretenders to reason and philosophy, the Atheists and Sceptics.

West.

§ 207. *The superiority of Christian philosophy over the Stoical.*

Epictetus often lays it down as a maxim, that it is impossible for one person to be in fault, and another to be the sufferer. This, on the supposition of a future state, will certainly be made true at last; but in the stoical sense, and system, is an absolute extravagance. Take any person of plain understanding, with all the feelings of humanity about him, and see whether the subtlest Stoic will ever be able to convince him, that while he is insulted, oppressed, and tortured, he doth not suffer. See what comfort it will afford him, to be told, that, if he supports his afflictions and ill-treatment with fortitude and patience, death will set him free, and then he and his persecutor will be equally rewarded; will equally lose all personal existence, and return to the elements. How different

are the consolations proposed by Christianity, which not only assures its disciples, that they shall rest from their labours in death, but that their works shall follow them: and by allowing them to rejoice in hope, teaches them the most effectual way of becoming patient in tribulation.

The Stoical doctrine, that human souls are literally parts of the Deity, was equally shocking, and hurtful; as it supposed portions of his being to be wicked and miserable; and by debasing men's ideas of the divine dignity, and teaching them to think themselves essentially as good as he, nourished in their minds an irreligious and fatal presumption. Far differently the Christian system represents mankind, not as a part of the essence, but a work of the hand of God: as created in a state of improveable virtue and happiness; fallen by an abuse of free will, into sin, misery, and weakness; but redeemed from them by an Almighty Saviour; furnished with additional knowledge and strength; commanded to use their best endeavours; made sensible, at the same time, how wretchedly defective they are; yet assured of endless felicity on a due exertion of them. The Stoic philosophy insults human nature and discourages all our attempts, by enjoining and promising a perfection in this life, of which we feel ourselves incapable. The Christian religion shows compassion to our weakness, by prescribing to us only the practicable task of aiming continually at further improvements, and animates our endeavours, by the promise of a divine aid, equal to every trial.

Specifying thus the errors and defects of so celebrated a system, is an unpleasant employment: but in an age, fond of preferring the guesses of human sagacity before the unerring declarations of God, it seemed on this occasion necessary to observe, that the Christian morality is agreeable to reason and nature; that of the Stoics, for the most part, founded on notions, intelligible to few; and which none could admit, without contradiction to their own hearts. They reasoned, many times, admirably well, but from false principles; and the noblest of their practical precepts, being built on a sandy basis, lay at the mercy of every strong temptation.

Stoicism is indeed in many points inferior to the doctrine of Socrates, which did not teach, that all externals were indifferent, which did teach a future state of recompence;

recompence; and agreeably to that, forbade suicide. It doth not belong to the present subject to shew, how much even this best system is excelled by Christianity. It is sufficient just to observe, that the author of it died in a profession, which he had always made of his belief in the popular deities, whose superstitions, and impure worship was the great source of corruption in the Heathen world; and the last words he uttered, were a direction to his friend, for the performance of an idolatrous ceremony. This melancholy instance of ignorance and error, in the most illustrious character for wisdom and virtue in all heathen antiquity, is not mentioned as a reflection on his memory, but as a proof of human weakness in general. Whether reason could have discovered the great truths, which in these days are ascribed to it, because now seen so clearly by the light of the Gospel, may be a question; but that it never did, is an undeniable fact; and that is enough to teach us thankfulness for the blessing of a better information. Socrates, who had, of all mankind, the fairest pretensions to set up for an instructor, and reformer of the world, confessed that he knew nothing, referred to tradition, and acknowledged the want of a superior guide: and there is a remarkable passage in Epictetus, in which he represents it, as the office of his supreme God, or of one deputed by him, to appear among mankind, as a teacher and example.

Upon the whole, the several sects of Heathen philosophy serve, as so many striking instances of the imperfection of human wisdom; and of the extreme need of a divine assistance, to rectify the mistakes of depraved reason, and to replace natural religion on its true foundation. The Stoics every where testify the noblest zeal for virtue, and the honour of God; but they attempted to establish them on principles inconsistent with the nature of man, and contradictory to truth and experience. By a direct consequence of these principles they were liable to be seduced, and in fact, often were seduced into pride, hard-heartedness, and the last dreadful extremity of human guilt, self-murder.

But however indefensible the philosophy of the Stoics in several instances may be, it appears to have been of very important use, in the heathen world; and they are, on many accounts, to be considered in a very respectable light. Their doctrine of

evidence and fixed principles, was an excellent preservative from the mischiefs, that might have arisen from the scepticism of the Academics and Pyrrhonists, if unopposed; and their zealous defence of a particular providence, a valuable antidote to the atheistical scheme of Epicurus. To this may be added, that their strict notions of virtue in most points, (for they sadly failed in some) and the lives of several among them, must contribute a good deal to preserve luxurious states from an absolutely universal dissoluteness; and the subjects of arbitrary government, from a wretched and contemptible pusillanimity.

Even now, their compositions may be read with great advantage, as containing excellent rules of self-government, and of social behaviour; of a noble reliance on the aid and protection of heaven, and of a perfect resignation and submission to the divine will; points, which are treated with great clearness, and with admirable spirit, in the lessons of the Stoics; and though their directions are seldom practicable on their principles, in trying cases, may be rendered highly useful in subordination to Christian reflections.

If, among those, who are so unhappy as to remain unconvinced of the truth of Christianity, any are prejudiced against it by the influence of unwarrantable inclinations; such persons will find very little advantage in rejecting the doctrines of the New Testament for those of the Portico; unless they think it an advantage to be laid under moral restraints, almost equal to those of the gospel, while they are deprived of its encouragements and supports. Deviations from the rules of sobriety, justice, and piety, meet with small indulgence in the stoic writings; and they, who profess to admire Epictetus, unless they pursue that severely virtuous conduct which he every where prescribes, will find themselves treated by him with the utmost degree of scorn and contempt. An immoral character is indeed, more or less, the out-cast of all sects of philosophy; and Seneca quotes even Epicurus, to prove the universal obligation of a virtuous life. Of this great truth, God never left himself without witness. Persons of distinguished talents and opportunities seem to have been raised, from time to time, by Providence, to check the torrent of corruption, and to preserve the sense of moral obligations on the minds of the multitude; to

whom

whom the various occupations of life left but little leisure to form deductions of their own. But then they wanted a proper commission to enforce their precepts; they intermixed with them, through false reasoning, many gross mistakes; and their unavoidable ignorance, in several important points, entangled them with doubts, which easily degenerated into pernicious errors.

If there are others, who reject Christianity, from motives of dislike to its peculiar doctrines, they will scarcely fail of entertaining more favourable impressions of it, if they can be prevailed on, with impartiality, to compare the Holy Scriptures, from whence alone the christian religion is to be learned, with the stoic writings; and then fairly to consider, whether there is any thing to be met with in the discoveries of our blessed Saviour, in the writings of his apostles, or even in the obscurest parts of the prophetic books, by which, equitably interpreted, either their senses, or their reason are contradicted, as they are by the paradoxes of these philosophers: and if not, whether notices from above, of things in which, though we comprehend them but imperfectly, we are possibly much more interested, than at present we discern, ought not to be received with implicit veneration; as useful exercises and trials of that duty, which finite understandings owe to infinite wisdom.

Miss Carter.

§ 208. *The more we study the Scriptures the more we shall perceive their divine origin, and the more we shall admire them.*

The more we read, the more we meditate on the Holy Scriptures, the more we shall discover in them an inexhaustible source of light, and of all manner of instruction; that their language is not the language of men, nor the subject a production of their ingenuity; that they have a character peculiar to themselves, and different from the compositions even of the greatest and best men; that they are exempt from all vulgar passions and interests, and to the ordinary views of human prudence and forecast; in fine, that no man ever raised himself so much above humanity as to produce a work, in which all is so superior to man.

The most accurate of the Pagan authors are justly charged with errors, dark-

ness, and uncertainties, with respect both to facts and doctrine: but it became the wise and great Being, who inspired the sacred penmen, to exempt their works from all such imputations; and, accordingly, he has favoured them with every argument of truth and persuasion, adorned them with the graces of language and sentiment, lighted up and enlivened them with the brightest examples of virtue and sanctity, annexed to their study and meditation such helps and communications of his Holy Spirit as cannot be described, and made the belief and practice of them the only foundation of true peace and happiness.—

Every one readily allows no subject can be equal to the life of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; that is, to the incarnation and birth; the miracles and doctrine; the sufferings and death; the resurrection and ascension of a God become man to reform and save a sinful and lost world: And whoever imagines this history can be better wrote than it is by the Evangelists, has it yet to learn. But though it becomes a Christian to be particularly conversant in this and the other writings of the New Testament, yet there is not any part of the Old which does not furnish ample matter of instruction.—The book of Genesis, in the account it gives of the creation, of the fall and punishment of our first parents, of the righteousness of Noah, of the deluge, of the wonderful obedience of Abraham, and the promise made by God to reward it, of the destruction of Sodom, and the providence of God over the patriarch Joseph, presents to our minds the most suitable subjects to fill them with every christian sentiment of reverence for the Supreme Being and his laws, love of his goodness, and dread of his justice. When we go on to Exodus, we see the wonders wrought by the Almighty in favour of his people, the impenitence of Pharaoh, and the various chastisements by which the murmurings and idolatry of the Israelites in the desert were punished, Leviticus and Numbers set forth the accuracy which God exacts in his worship; Deuteronomy, the sanctity of his laws; Joshua, the accomplishment of his promises. In the book of Judges, we see the strength and weakness of Sampson; in that of Ruth, the plain-dealing and equity of Boaz; in those of Kings, the holiness of Samuel, of Elijah, of Elisha, and the other prophets; the reprobation of Saul; the fall and repentance

penitance of David, his mildness and patience; the wisdom and sin of Solomon; the piety of Hezekiah and Josiah. In Esdras, the zeal for the law of God; in Tobit, the conduct of a holy family; in Judith, the power of grace; in Esther, prudence; in Job, a pattern of admirable patience. The Maccabees afford such instances of personal and national bravery; such an exalted and generous love of our country, and all this grounded on the true principles of valour and patriotism, as the most boasted achievements in profane story are perfect strangers to. The Proverbs and Ecclesiastics, and the other two books which go under the title of the Wisdom of Solomon and of the Son of Sirach, teach a more useful and sublime philosophy than all the writings which Greece and Rome have published. The noble images and reflections, the profound reasonings on human actions, and excellent precepts for the government of life, sufficiently witness their inspired origin. This treasure, indeed, is thrown together in a confused magnificence, above all order, that every one may collect and digest such observations as chiefly tend to his own particular instruction. And though it behoves us to reverence the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, rather than pretend to assign the reasons for his dispensing it in this or that manner, yet, I think, we perceive the fitness of the method here taken, in setting forth the nature, substance, and end of our obligations; and, without entering on minute discussions, in taking in the whole compass of duty; for by this means the paths of life are not only pointed out to each individual, and his personal character formed; but the minds of mankind, in general, are furnished and enriched with the beauty, copiousness, and variety of all virtues.—The Prophets announce not only the promises, but also the characteristic marks of the Messiah, with the threats against sinners, and those calamities which were to befall the Jews and other nations. The Psalms unite in themselves the chief subjects, and all the different excellencies of the Old Testament. In a word, every thing in the Sacred Writings will appear, as it truly is, holy, grand, and profitable, provided it be read with suitable disposition.

Phillips.

§ 209. *Beautiful instances of Friendship in the Scriptures.*

One of the strongest and most affecting instances of a faithful attachment to be met with in history, occurs in the friendship which subsisted between two females. The instance alluded to, is recorded in the Jewish annals, and most pathetically related by one of the sacred pen-men. The reader need not be told, that this is the friendship of Naomi and Ruth.

Two very remarkable instances of friendship occur, in the history of our Saviour's life: it may not perhaps be altogether unnecessary to state them in all their striking circumstances.

The Evangelist, in relating the miracles which Christ performed at Bethany, by restoring a person to life who had lain some days in the grave, introduces his narrative by emphatically observing, that "Jesus loved Lazarus;" intimating, it should seem, that the sentiments which Christ entertained of Lazarus, were a distinct and peculiar species of that general benevolence with which he was actuated towards all mankind. Agreeably to this explication of the sacred historian's meaning, when the sisters of Lazarus sent to acquaint Jesus with the state in which their brother lay; they did not even mention his name; but pointed him out by a more honourable and equally notorious designation; the terms of their message were, "behold! he whom thou lovest is sick!" Accordingly, when he informs his disciples of the notice he had thus received, his expression is, "our friend Lazarus sleepeth." Now that Christ did not upon this occasion use the word friend in its loose undistinguishing acceptation, but in a restrained and strictly appropriated sense; is not only manifest from this plain account of the fact itself, but appears farther evident from the sequel. For, as he was advancing to the grave, accompanied with the relations of the deceased, he discovered the same emotions of grief as swelled the bosoms of those with whom Lazarus had been most intimately connected; and sympathizing with their common sorrow, he melted into tears. This circumstance was too remarkable to escape particular observation: and it drew from the spectators, what one should think it must necessarily draw from every reader, this natural

and

and obvious reflection, "behold! how he loved him!"

But in the concluding catastrophe of our Saviour's life, he gave a still more decisive proof, that sentiments of the strongest personal attachment and friendship, were not unworthy of being admitted into his sacred bosom. They were too deeply, indeed, impressed, to be extinguished even by the most excruciating torments. In those dreadful moments, observing among the afflicted witnesses of his painful and ignominious sufferings, that faithful follower, who is described by the historian as "the disciple whom he loved;" he distinguished him by the most convincing instance of superior confidence, esteem, and affection that ever was exhibited to the admiration of mankind. For, under circumstances of the most agonizing torments, when it might be thought impossible for human nature to retain any other sensibility but that of its own inexpressible sufferings; he recommended to the care and protection of this his tried and approved friend, in terms of peculiar regard and endearment, the most tender and sacred object of his private affections. But no language can represent this pathetic and affecting scene, with a force and energy equal to the sublime simplicity of the Evangelist's own narrative: "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother and his mother's sister, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple by, whom he loved; he saith to his mother, Behold thy son! Then he saith to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home."

It may safely be asserted, that among all those memorable examples of friendship which have been celebrated with the highest encomiums by the ancients; there cannot be produced a single instance, in which the most distinguishing features of exalted amity are so strongly displayed, as in the foregoing relation. The only one, perhaps, that bears even a faint resemblance to it, is that famous transaction, recorded by Lucian in his dialogue intitled *Toxaris*. Eudamidas being on his death bed made his will, by which he bequeathed his aged mother to the care and protection of Aretheus; and his daughter to Charixenus, to be disposed of in marriage according to his discretion; injoining him, at the same time, to give her as ample a portion as his circumstances would admit.

He added, that in case either of the legatees should happen to die, he substituted the survivor in his stead. Charixenus died very soon after the testator: in consequence of which, Aretheus took each of these singularly confidential legacies to himself; and celebrating the marriage of his only daughter and that of his friend, on the same day, he divided his fortune equally between them.

When the very different circumstances attending these respective examples, are duly considered; it must be acknowledged, that the former rises as much above the latter in the proof it exhibits of sublime friendship, as it does in the dignity of the characters concerned. Upon the whole then it appears, that the divine founder of the Christian religion, as well by his own example, as by the spirit of his moral doctrine, has not only encouraged but consecrated friendship.

Melmoth.

§ 210. *Fine Morality of the Gospel.*

Is it bigotry to believe the sublime truths of the Gospel with full assurance of faith? I glory in such bigotry: I would not part with it for a thousand worlds; I congratulate the man who is possessed of it; for, amidst all the vicissitudes and calamities of the present state, that man enjoys an inexhaustible fund of consolation, of which it is not in the power of fortune to deprive him.

—There is not a book on earth so favourable to all the kind, and all the sublime affections, or so unfriendly to hatred and persecution, to tyranny, injustice, and every sort of malevolence as the Gospel.—It breathes nothing throughout but mercy, benevolence, and peace.—

Poetry is sublime, when it awakens in the mind any great and good affection, as piety, or patriotism. This is one of the noblest effects of the heart. The Psalms are remarkable, beyond all other writings, for their power of inspiring devout emotions. But it is not in this respect only that they are sublime. Of the Divine nature they contain the most magnificent descriptions that the soul of man can comprehend. The hundred and fourth Psalm, in particular, displays the power and goodness of Providence, in creating and preserving the world, and the various tribes of animals in it; with such majestic brevity and beauty, as it is vain to look for in any human composition.—

Such

Such of the doctrines of the Gospel as are level to human capacity appear to be agreeable to the purest truth and the soundest morality. All the genius and learning of the Heathen world; all the penetration of Pythagoras, Socrates, and Aristotle, had never been able to produce such a system of moral duty, and so rational an account of providence and of man, as is to be found in the New Testament. Compared, indeed, to this, all other moral and theological wisdom

Loses discountenanced, and like folly
shews. *Beattie.*

§ 211. *Beneficence to the poor more forcibly enjoined by the Gospel, than by any other writings.*

The Christian Scriptures are more copious and explicit upon our obligation to bestow relief upon the poor than almost any other. The description which Christ hath left us of the proceedings of the last day, establishes the obligation of bounty, so far as his authority can be depended upon, beyond controversy. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another.—Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.—And inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." It is not necessary to understand this passage as a literal account of what will actually pass on that day. Supposing it only a scenical description of the rules and principles, by which the supreme arbiter of our destiny will regulate his decisions, it conveys the same lesson to us; it equally demonstrates of how great value and importance these duties in the sight of God are, and what stress will be laid upon them. The apostles also describe this virtue as propitiating the divine favour in an eminent degree: and these recommendations have produced their effect. It does not appear that before the times of Christianity, an hospital, infirmary,

or public charity of any kind, existed in the world; whereas most countries in Christendom have long abounded with these institutions. To which may be added, that a spirit of private liberality seems to flourish amidst the decay of many other virtues: not to mention the legal provision for the poor, which obtains in this country, and which was unknown and unthought of by the most polished nations of antiquity.

Rev. W. Paley.

§ 212. *The simplicity of the Gospel gives it an air of sublimity.*

The graceful negligence of nature always pleases beyond the truest ornaments that art can devise. Indeed, they are then truest, when they approach the nearest to this negligence. To attain it, is the very triumph of art. The wise artist, therefore, always compleats his studies in the great school of creation, where the forms of elegance lie scattered in an endless variety, and the writer who wishes to possess some portion of that sovereign excellence, simplicity, even though he were an infidel, would have recourse to the Scriptures, and make them his model.—

The pathetic and sublime simplicity of our Saviour's whole description of the last judgment cannot be paralleled in any writing of any age.

—In the Gospel we find no pompous displays of reasoning; no laboured and difficult distinctions; no long and learned enquiries concerning the nature and kinds of virtue; but virtue itself represented to the life; in examples, and precepts, which are level to the plainest understandings; in familiar occurrences; in short and simple narrations; in actions, or discourses, real or imagined. And perhaps, among other things, it is this unsystematic form, this neglect of art and method, which produces that graceful ease, that venerable, majestic simplicity, that air of truth and originality, which distinguish the Scriptures from all human writings. *Rev. J. Mainwaring.*

§ 213. *The Bible, as a very curious and ancient history, worthy our attention.*

Were the Bible but considered impartially and attentively, in its most advantageous lights; as it contains all the written revelation of God's will now extant; as it is the basis of our national religion, and gives vigour and spirit to all our social laws; as it is the most ancient, and consequently,

frequently, curious collection of historical incidents, moral precepts, and political institutions; as the style of it is, in some places, nobly sublime and poetical, and in others, sweetly natural, plain, and unaffected: in a word, as the being well acquainted with it is highly requisite, in order to make men useful and ornamental in this life, to say nothing of their happiness in the next, it is to be hoped, that a cool reflection or two of this sort, might induce the more ingenious and rational among them, to let the Bible take its turn, in their riper years, among those volumes which pass through their hands either for amusement or instruction. And should such an entertainment once become fashionable, of what mighty service would it be to the interest of religion, and consequently the happiness of mankind!

Rev. S. Coxall.

§ 214. *Excellence of the Sacred Writings.*

If we examine the Sacred Records, we shall find they consist of four different kinds, the poetic, oratorical, historical, and didactic forms. The poetic lies chiefly in the book of Psalms, of Job, and several detached passages in the Prophets, particularly of Isaiah. They contain many noble efforts of unmixed poetry or pure imitation; yet these, being all centered in one intention, that of extolling the works, and celebrating the power, wisdom, and goodness of the Deity, do generally partake of the character of eloquence, being chiefly of the lyric kind. In all these, the great character of simplicity is so strongly predominant, that every attempt to embellish them, by adding the superfluous decorations of style in translation, hath ever been found to weaken and debase them.

As to the oratorical or pathetic parts, innumerable might be produced, equal, if not superior to any recorded by profane antiquity. In these, the leading character of simplicity is no less remarkable. Our Saviour's parables and exhortations are generally admirable in this quality. Filled with unfeigned compassion for the weakness and miseries of man, they breathe nothing but the purest benevolence. St. Paul's last conversation with his friends at Ephesus, on his departure for Jerusalem; his discourse on the resurrection, and on charity; his reproofs, his commendations, his apologies, especially that before Agrip-

pa, are wrote in the noblest strain of simplicity. And as a perfect model of this kind, we may give the story of Joseph and his brethren, which for tenderness, true pathos, and unmixed simplicity, is beyond compare, superior to any thing that appears in ancient story.

But as the most important part of Scripture lies in the historical and preceptive part; especially in the New Testament, whence chiefly our idea of duty must be drawn; so we find this uniform and simple manner eminently prevailing throughout, in every precept and narration. The history is conveyed in that artless strain which alone could adapt it to the capacities of all mankind; the precepts delivered by our Saviour are drawn from the principles of common sense, improved by the most exalted love of God and man; and either expressed in clear and direct terms, or couched under such images and allusions, as are every where to be found in nature, such as are, and must ever be universally known, and familiar to all mankind; in which we may further observe, his manner of teaching was greatly superior to the justly applauded Socrates, who, for the most part, drew his images and allusions from the less known arts and manners of the city. Through all this variety of striking allusion and moral precept the style ever continues the same, unadorned, simple, vehement and majestic; yet never drawing the reader's attention on itself, but on the divine sentiments it conveys.

To this we may further add, that these several kinds of composition are mixed and united with such propriety and force, as is scarce to be equalled in any other writings. The poetical parts are heightened by the greatest strokes of eloquence and precept; the pathetic by the noblest imagery and strictest morals; and the preceptive is strengthened and enforced by all the aids of poetry, eloquence, and parable; calculated at once to engage the imagination, to touch the passions, and command the reason of mankind.

Rev. J. Brown.

§ 215. *Queen Anne's Prayer.*

Almighty and eternal God, the disposer of all the affairs in the world, there is nothing so great as not to be subject to thy power, nor so small, but it comes within thy care; thy goodness and wisdom shew themselves through all thy works,

and

and thy loving kindness and mercy do appear in the several dispensations of thy providence, of which, at this time I earnestly desire to have a deep and humble sense. It has pleased thee to take to thy mercy my dearest husband, who was the comfort and joy of my life, after we had lived together many years happily in all conjugal love and affection. May I readily submit myself to thy good pleasure, and sincerely resign mine own will to thine, with all Christian patience, meekness and humility. Do thou graciously pardon the errors and failings of my life, which have been the occasion of thy displeasure; and let thy judgments bring me to sincere and unfeigned repentance, and to answer the wise ends for which thou hast sent them. Be thou pleased so to assist me with the grace of thy Holy Spirit, that I may continue to govern the people which thou hast committed to my charge, in godliness, righteousness, justice, and mercy. In the management of all affairs, public and private, grant I may have a strict regard to thy holy will, that I may diligently and heartily advance thy glory, and ever entirely depend on thy providence. Do thou, O gracious Father, be pleased to grant I may do the greatest good I can in all my capacity, and be daily improving every Christian grace and virtue; so that when thou shalt think fit to put an end to this short and uncertain life, I may be made a partaker of those gracious, endless joys, which thou hast prepared for those that love and fear thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

§ 216. *Prince Eugene's Prayer.*

I believe in thee, O my God! Do thou strengthen my faith: I hope in thee; confirm my hopes: I love thee; inflame my love more and more: I repent of all my sins; but do thou encrease my repentance! As my first beginning I worship thee; as my last end I long for thee: as my eternal benefactor, I praise thee; and as my supreme protector I pray unto thee; that it may please thee, O Lord, to guide and lead me by thy providence, to keep me in obedience to thy justice; to comfort me by thy mercy, and to protect me by thy almighty power. I submit unto thee all my thoughts, words, and actions, as well as my afflictions, pains, and sufferings, and I desire to have thee always in my mind, to do all my works in thy name, and for

thy sake to bear all adversity with patience. I will nothing but what thou wilt, O God; because 'tis agreeable unto thee. O give me grace that I may be attentive in my prayer, temperate in my diet, vigilant in my conduct, and unmoveable in all good purposes. Grant, most merciful Lord, that I may be true and faithful to those that have entrusted me with their secrets; that I may be courteous and kind towards all men, and that both in my words and actions, I may shew unto them a good example. Dispose my heart to admire and praise thy goodness, to hate all errors and evil works, to love my neighbour, and to despise the world. Assist me good God, in subduing lust by mortification, covetousness by liberality, anger by mildness, and lukewarmness by zeal and fervency. Enable me to conduct myself with prudence in all transactions, and to shew courage in danger, patience in adversity, and in prosperity an humble mind. Let thy grace illuminate my understanding, direct my will, sanctify my body, and bless my soul. Make me diligent in curbing all irregular affections, zealous in imploving thy grace, careful in keeping thy commandments, and constant in working out my own salvation. Finally, O God, make me sensible how little is the world, how great thy heavens, how short time, and how long will be the blessed eternity. O that I may prepare myself for death! that I may dread thy judgments, that I may avoid the torments of hell, and obtain of thee, O God! eternal life through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

§ 217. *The gay, young Altamont dying.*

The sad evening before the death of this noble youth I was with him. No one was there, but his physician, and an intimate friend whom he loved, and whom he had ruined. At my coming in, he said;

You, and the physician, are come too late.—I have neither life, nor hope. You both aim at miracles. You would raise the dead.

Heaven, I said, was merciful.—

Or I could not have been thus guilty. What has it not done to bless and to save me?—I have been too strong for Omnipotence! I plucked down ruin!

I said, The blessed Redeemer.—
Hold! hold! you wound me!—This is the rock on which I split—I denied his name.

Refusing

Refusing to hear any thing from me, or take any thing from the physician, he lay silent, as far as sudden darts of pain would permit, till the clock struck. Then with vehemence;

Oh, time! time! it is fit thou shouldst thus strike thy murderer to the heart.—How art thou fled for ever!—A month!—Oh, for a single week! I ask not for years; tho' an age were too little for the much I have to do.

Oh my saying, we could not do too much: that heaven was a blessed place—

So much the worse. 'Tis lost! 'tis lost!—Heaven is to me the severest part of hell!

Soon after I proposed prayer,

Pray you that can. I never prayed, I cannot pray—Nor need I. Is not heaven on my side already? It closes with my conscience. Its severest strokes but second my own.

His friend being much touched, even to tears, at this, (who could forbear? I could not) with a most affectionate look, he said:

Keep those tears for thyself. I have undone thee.—Dost weep for me? That's cruel. What can pain me more?

Here his friend, too much affected, would have left him.

No, stay. Thou still mayest hope.—Therefore hear me. How madly have I talked? How madly hast thou listened and believed? But look on my present state, as a full answer to thee, and to myself. This body is all weakness and pain; but my soul, as if strung up by torment to greater strength and spirit, is full powerful to reason; full mighty to suffer. And that, which thus triumphs within the jaws of mortality, is doubtless immortal.—And, as for a Deity, nothing less than an Almighty could inflict what I feel.

I was about to congratulate this passive, involuntary, confessor, on his asserting the two prime articles of his creed, extorted by the rack of nature; when he thus, very passionately:

No, no! let me speak on. I have not long to speak—My much injured friend! my soul, as my body, lies in ruins; in scattered fragments of broken thought; remorse for the past, throws my thoughts on the future. Worse dread of the future, strikes it back on the past. I turn, and turn, and find no ray. Didst thou feel half the mountain that is on me, thou

wouldst struggle with the martyr for his stake; and bless heaven for the flames;—that is not an everlasting flame; that is not an unquenchable fire.

How were we struck! Yet, soon after, still more. With what an eye of distraction, what a face of despair, he cried out:

My principles have poisoned my friend; my extravagance has beggared my boy; my unkindness has murdered my wife! And is there another hell?—Oh! thou blasphemed, yet most indulgent, Lord God! Hell itself is a refuge, if it hides me from thy frown.

Soon after his understanding failed. His terrified imagination uttered horrors not to be repeated, or ever forgot. And ere the sun arose, the gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched Altamont expired. *Young.*

§ 218. *The Majesty and Supremacy of the Scriptures confessed by a Sceptic.*

I will confess to you, that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the Gospel hath its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers with all their pomp of diction: how mean, how contemptible are they compared with the Scripture! Is it possible that a book, at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of man? Is it possible that the sacred personage, whose history it contains, should be himself a mere man? Do we find that he assumed the tone of an enthusiast or ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his manner! What an affecting gracefulness in his delivery! What sublimity in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind, what subtlety, what truth in his replies! How great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live, and so die, without weakness, and without ostentation? When Plato described his imaginary good man loaded with all the shame of guilt, yet meriting the highest rewards of virtue, he describes exactly the character of Jesus Christ: the resemblance was so striking, that all the Fathers perceived it.

What prepossession, what blindness must it be, to compare the son of Sophroniscus to the son of Mary! What an infinite disproportion there is between them! Socrates dying without pain or ignominy, easily supposed his character to the last; and if

his death, however easy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom, was any thing more than a vain sophist. He invented, it is said, the theory of morals. Others, however, had before put them in practice; he had only to say therefore what they had done, and to reduce their examples to precepts. Aristides had been just before Socrates defined justice; Leonidas had given up his life for his country before Socrates declared patriotism to be a duty; the Spartans were a sober people before Socrates recommended sobriety; before he had even defined virtue, Greece abounded in virtuous men. But where could Jesus learn, among his competitors, that pure and sublime morality, of which he only hath given us both precept and example. The greatest wisdom was made known amongst the most bigotted fanaticism, and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues did honour to the vilest people on earth. The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophizing with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for; that of Jesus, expiring in the midst of agonizing pains, abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared. Socrates in receiving the cup of poison, blessed indeed the weeping executioner who administered it; but Jesus, in the midst of excruciating tortures, prayed for his merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God. Shall we suppose the evangelic history a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of fiction; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty without obviating it: it is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one only should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospel, the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero.

Rousseau.

§ 219. *John Earl of Rochester's dying Recantation.*

When John Earl of Rochester came to see and consider his prodigious guilt and danger, what invectives did he use against himself, terming himself an ungrateful dog, and the vilest wretch that the sun shone upon; wishing he had been a crawling leper in a ditch, a link-boy, or a beggar, or had lived in a dungeon, rather than offended God as he had done! He sent awful messages to his copartners in sin, and advised a gentleman of character, that came to visit him, in these words: O remember that you condemn God no more. He is an avenging God, and will visit you for your sins; and will, I hope, in mercy, touch your conscience as he hath done mine. You and I have been friends and sinners together a great while, therefore I am the more free with you. We have been all mistaken in our conceits and opinions; our persuasions have been false and groundless, therefore God grant you repentance. And seeing the same gentleman the next day, he said, Perhaps you were disobliged by my plainness with you yesterday: I spake the words of truth and soberness; and striking his hand on his breast, added, I hope God will touch your heart.

He condemned that foolish and absurd philosophy which the world so much admired, propagated by the late Thomas Hobbs; which, he said, had undone him, and many more of the best parts in the nation.

He commanded that his profane writings and obscene pictures should be burnt.

He wished his son might never be a wit; which is, as he explained it, one of those wretched creatures, who pride themselves in abusing God and religion.

He protested he would not commit any known sin to gain a kingdom.

And for the admonition of others, he subscribed the following recantation, and ordered it to be published, (viz.)

For the benefit of all those whom I may have drawn into sin by my example and encouragement, I leave to the world this my last declaration, which I deliver in the presence of the great God, who knows the secrets of all hearts, and before whom I am now appearing to be judged: That from the bottom of my soul, I detest and abhor the whole course of my former wicked

wicked life; that I think I can never sufficiently admire the goodness of God, who has given me a true sense of my pernicious opinions and vile practices, by which I have hitherto lived without hope, and without God in the world; have been an open enemy to Jesus Christ, doing the utmost despite to the Holy Spirit of grace: and that the greatest testimony of my charity to such, is, to warn them, in the name of God, as they regard the welfare of their immortal souls, no more to deny his being or his providence, or despise his goodness; no more to make a mock of sin, or condemn the pure and excellent religion of my ever blessed Redeemer, thro' whose merits alone, I, one of the greatest of sinners, do yet hope for mercy and forgiveness. Amen.

Declared and signed in the presence of Ann Rochester, Robert Parsons, June 19, 1680.

J. ROCHESTER.

§ 120. *To the Biographer of Hume.*

Upon the whole, Doctor, your meaning is good; but I think you will not succeed, this time. You would persuade us, by the example of David Hume, Esq; that atheism is the only cordial for low spirits, and the proper antidote against the fear of death. But surely, he who can reflect, with complacency, on a friend thus misemploying his talents in his life, and then, amusing himself with Lucian, Whist, and Charon, at his death, may smile over Babylon in ruins; esteem the earthquake, which destroyed Lisbon, an agreeable occurrence; and congratulate the hardened Pharoah, on his overthrow in the Red Sea. Drollery in such circumstances, is neither more nor less, than

Moody madness, laughing wild,
Amid severest woe.

Would we know the baneful and pestilential influences of false philosophy on the human heart? We need only contemplate them in this most deplorable instance of Mr. Hume. These sayings, Sir, may appear harsh; but they are salutary. And if departed spirits have any knowledge of what is passing upon earth, that person will be regarded by your friend as rendering him the truest services, who, by energy of expression, and warmth of exhortation, shall most contribute to prevent his writings from producing those effects upon mankind which he no longer wishes they should

produce. Let no man deceive himself, or be deceived by others. It is the voice of eternal Truth, which crieth aloud, and saith to you, Sir, and to me, and to all the world—"He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

By way of contrast to the behaviour of Mr. Hume, at the close of a life, passed without God in the world, permit me, Sir, to lay before yourself, and the public, the last sentiments of the truly learned, judicious, and admirable Hooker, who had spent his days in the service of his Maker and Redeemer.

After this manner, therefore, spake the author of the Ecclesiastical Polity, immediately before he expired:—

I have lived to see, that this world is made up of perturbations; and I have been long preparing to leave it, and gathering comfort for the dreadful hour of making my account with God, which I now apprehend to be near. And though I have, by his grace, loved him in my youth, and feared him in mine age, and laboured to have a conscience void of offence, towards him, and towards all men; yet, "if thou, Lord, shouldest be extreme to mark what I have done amiss, who can abide it?" And therefore, where I have failed, Lord shew mercy to me, for I plead not my righteousness, but the forgiveness of my unrighteousness, through his merits, who died to purchase pardon for penitent sinners. And since I owe thee a death, Lord, let it not be terrible, and then take thine own time; I submit to it. "Let not mine, O Lord, but thy will be done!"—God hath heard my daily petitions; for I am at peace with all men, and he is at peace with me. From such blessed assurance I feel that inward joy, which this world can neither give, nor take from me. My conscience beareth me this witness, and this witness makes the thoughts of death joyful. I could wish to live, to do the church more service; but cannot hope it; for "my days are past, as a shadow that returns not."

His worthy Biographer adds—

More he would have spoken, but his spirits failed him; and, after a short conflict between nature and death, a quiet sigh put a period to his last breath, and so, he fell asleep—And now he seems to rest like Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. Let me

here draw his curtain, till, with the most glorious company of the patriarchs and apostles, and the most noble army of martyrs and confessors, this most learned, most humble, and most holy man shall also awake to receive an eternal tranquillity, and with it a greater degree of glory, than common Christians shall be made partakers of!—

Doctor Smith, when the hour of his de-

parture hence shall arrive, will copy the example of the believer, or the infidel, as it liketh him best. I must freely own, I have no opinion of that reader's head, or heart, who will not exclaim, as I find myself obliged to do—

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

Rev. G. Horne.

PHYSICO-THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS.

§ 1. *Reflections on the Heavens.*

THE planets and comets which move round the Sun as their centre, constitute what is called, the Solar System. Those planets which are near the Sun not only finish their circuits sooner, but likewise move faster in their respective orbits, than those which are more remote from him. The motions of the planets are all performed from west to east, in orbits nearly circular. Their names, distances, bulks, and periodical revolutions, are as follow:

The Sun, an immense globe of fire, is placed near the common centre of the orbits of all the planets and comets; and turns round his axis in 25 days 6 hours. His diameter is computed to be 763,000 miles.

Mercury, the nearest planet to the Sun, goes round him in 87 days 23 hours, which is the length of his year. But, being seldom seen, and no spots appearing on his surface, the time of his rotation on his axis, is as yet unknown. His distance from the Sun is computed to be 32,000,000 of miles, and his diameter 2,600. In his course round the Sun, he moves at the rate of 95,000 miles every hour. His light and heat are almost seven times as great as ours; and the Sun appears to him almost seven times as large as to us.

Venus, the next planet in order, is computed to be 59,000,000 miles from the sun; and by moving at the rate of 69,000 miles every hour in her orbit, she goes round the Sun in 225 of our days nearly. Her diameter is 7,906 miles; and by her motion upon her axis the inhabitants are carried 43 miles every hour.

The Earth is the next planet above Venus in the system. It is 82,000,000 miles from the Sun, and goes round him in a little more than 365 days. It travels at the rate of 1,000 miles every hour on its axis; is about 8,000 miles in diameter. In its

orbit it moves at the rate of 58,000 every hour; which motion, though 120 times swifter than that of a cannon ball, is little more than half as swift as Mercury's motion in his orbit.

The Moon is not a planet, but only an attendant upon the Earth; going round it in a little more than 29 days, and round the Sun with it every year. The Moon's diameter is 2,180 miles, and her distance from the Earth's centre 240,000. She goes round her orbit in about 27 days, at the rate of near 2,300 miles every hour.

Mars is the planet next in order, being the first above the Earth's orbit. His distance from the Sun is computed to be 125,000,000 miles; and by travelling at the rate of 47,000 miles every hour, he goes round the Sun in about 687 of our days. His diameter is 4,444 miles, and by his diurnal rotation the inhabitants are carried 556 miles every hour.

Jupiter, the biggest of all the planets, is still higher in the system, being about 426,000,000 miles from the Sun; and going at the rate of 25,000 miles every hour in his orbit. His annual period is finished in about 12 of our years. He is above 1,000 times as big as the Earth, for his diameter is 81,000 miles; which is more than ten times the diameter of the Earth. Jupiter turns round his axis in near 10 hours, and his year contains upwards of 10,000 of our days. His equatorial inhabitants are carried nearly 26,000 miles every hour, besides the 25,000 above mentioned by his annual motion.

Jupiter has four moons. The first goes round him in about two of our days, at the distance of 22,900 miles from his centre: the second performs its revolution in about three days and a half, at 364,000 miles distance: the third in a little more than seven days, at the distance of 580,000 miles: and the fourth in near 17 days, at the

the distance of 1,000,000 miles from his centre.

Besides these moons, Jupiter is surrounded by faint substances, called belts, in which so many changes appear, that philosophers are not agreed either concerning their nature or use.

Saturn, the next to Jupiter, is about 780,000,000 miles from the Sun; and travelling at the rate of 18,000 miles every hour; performs its annual circuit in about 30 years. Its diameter is 67,000 miles; and therefore it is near 600 times as big as the Earth.

This planet has five moons: the first goes round him in near two days, at the distance of 140,000 miles from its centre: the second in near three days, at the distance of 187,000 miles: the third in four days and a half, at the distance of 263,000 miles: the fourth in about 16 days, at the distance of 600,000 miles: and the fifth in about 80 days, at the distance of 1,800,000 miles.

Besides these moons, Saturn is attended with a thin broad ring, as an artificial globe is by an horizon; the nature and use of which are but little known at present.

Georgium Sidus, the remotest of all the planets yet discovered, is near 40,000 miles in diameter, and upwards of 83 years in performing its revolution. How many moons this planet is attended by is unknown. Two have been already discovered. And, if the ingenious and indefatigable Mr. Herschel is spared with life and health, we may expect to be favoured with still further discoveries.

Every person who looks upon, and compares the systems of moons together, which belong to Jupiter, Saturn, and the Georgium Sidus, must be amazed at the vast magnitude of these three planets, and the noble attendance they have in respect to our little Earth: and can never bring himself to think, that an infinitely wise Creator should dispose of all his animals and vegetables here, leaving the other planets bare and destitute of rational creatures. To suppose that he had any view to our benefit, in creating these moons, and giving them their motions round their respective primaries; to imagine, that he intended these vast bodies for any advantage to us, when he well knew, that they could never be seen but by a few astronomers peeping through telescopes; and that he gave to the planets regular returns of day and night,

and different seasons to all, where they would be convenient; but of no manner of service to us, except only what immediately regards our own planet, the Earth; to imagine, I say, that he did all this on our account, would be charging him impiously with having done much in vain: and as absurd, as to imagine that he has created a little sun and a planetary system within the shell of our Earth, and intended them for our use. These considerations amount to little less than a positive proof, that all the planets are inhabited: for if they are not, why all this care in furnishing them with so many moons, to supply those with light, which are at the greater distances from the sun? Do we not see, that the farther a planet is from the Sun, the greater apparatus it has for that purpose? save only Mars, which being but a small planet, may have moons too small to be seen by us. We know that the Earth goes round the Sun, and turns round its own axis, to produce the vicissitudes of summer and winter by the former, and of day and night by the latter motion, for the benefit of its inhabitants. May we not then fairly conclude, by parity of reason, that the end and design of all the other planets is the same? And is not this agreeable to the beautiful harmony which exists throughout the universe? Surely it is: and raises in us the most magnificent ideas of the Supreme Being, who is every where, and at all times present; displaying his power, wisdom and goodness, among all his creatures! and distributing happiness to innumerable ranks of various beings!

The comets are solid opaque bodies, with long transparent tails or trains, issuing from that side which is turned away from the Sun. They move about the Sun, in very eccentric ellipses, and are of a much greater density than the Earth; for some of them are heated in every period to such a degree, as would vitrify or dissipate any substance known to us. Sir Isaac Newton computed the heat of the comet, which appeared in the year 1680, when nearest the Sun, to be 2,000 times hotter than red-hot iron, and that, being thus heated, it must retain its heat until it comes round again, although its period should be more than 20,000 years; and it is computed to be only 575.

It is believed, that there are at least 21 comets belonging to our system, moving

ing in all sorts of directions. But of all these the periods of three only are known with any degree of certainty. The first of the three appeared in the years 1531, 1607, 1682, and 1758, and is expected to appear every 75th year. The second of them appeared in 1532 and 1661, and may be expected to return in 1789, and every 129th year afterwards. The third, having last appeared in 1680, and its period being no less than 575 years, cannot return until the year 2255. This comet, at its greatest distance, is about 11,200,000,000 miles from the Sun; and at its least distance from the Sun's centre, which is 49,000 miles, is within less than a third part of the Sun's semi-diameter from his surface. In that part of its orbit which is nearest the Sun, it flies with the amazing swiftness of 880,000 miles in an hour; and the Sun, as seen from it, appears an 100 degrees in breadth, consequently 40,000 times as large as he appears to us. The astonishing length that this comet runs out into empty space, suggests to our minds an idea of the vast distance between the Sun and the nearest fixed stars; of whose attractions all the comets must keep clear, to return periodically, and go round the Sun: and it shews us also, that the nearest stars, which are probably those that seem the largest, are as big as our Sun; and of the same nature with him; otherwise, they could not appear so large and bright to us as they do at such an immense distance.

The extreme heat, the dense atmosphere, the gross vapours, the chaotic state of the comets, seem at first sight to indicate them altogether unfit for the purposes of animal life, and a most miserable habitation for rational beings; and therefore some are of opinion, that they are so many hells for tormenting the damned with perpetual vicissitudes of heat and cold. But when we consider, on the other hand, the infinite power and goodness of the Deity; the latter inclining, the former enabling him to make creatures suited to all states and circumstances; that matter exists only for the sake of intelligent beings; and that wherever we find it, we always find it pregnant with life, or necessarily subservient thereto; the numberless species, the astonishing diversity of animals in earth, air, water, and even on other animals; every blade of grass, every tender leaf, every natural fluid, swarming with life;

and every one of these enjoying such gratifications as the nature and state of each requires: when we reflect moreover, that some centuries ago, till experience undeceived us, a great part of the earth was judged uninhabitable; the torrid zone, by reason of excessive heat, and the two frigid zones because of their intolerable cold; it seems highly probable, that such numerous and large masses of durable matter as the comets are, however unlike they be to our earth, are not destitute of beings capable of contemplating with wonder, and acknowledging with gratitude, the wisdom, symmetry, and beauty of the creation; which is more plainly to be observed in their extensive tour through the heavens, than in our more confined circuit. If farther conjecture is permitted, may we not suppose them instrumental in recruiting the expended fuel of the Sun; and supplying the exhausted moisture of the planets?—However difficult it may be, circumstanced as we are, to find out their particular destination, this is an undoubted truth, that wherever the Deity exerts his power, there he also manifests his wisdom and goodness.

The fixed stars, as appears from several considerations, are placed at an immense distance from us. Our Earth is at so great a distance from the Sun, that if seen from thence, it would appear no bigger than a point, although its circumference is known to be upwards of 25,000 miles. Yet that distance is so small, compared with the Earth's distance from the fixed stars, that if the orbit in which the Earth moves round the Sun were solid, and seen from the nearest star, it would likewise appear no bigger than a point, although it is at least 162,000,000 miles in diameter. For the Earth in going round the Sun is 162,000,000 miles nearer to some of the stars at one time of the year, than at another; and yet their apparent magnitudes, situations, and distances from one another still remain the same; and a telescope which magnifies above 200 times, does not sensibly magnify them: which proves them to be at least 400,000 times farther from us than we are from the Sun.

It is not to be imagined, that all the stars are placed in one concave surface, so as to be equally distant from us; but that they are scattered at immense distances from one another through unlimited space. So that there may be as great a distance

between any two neighbouring stars, as between our Sun and those which are nearest to him. Therefore an observer, who is nearest to any fixed star, will look upon it alone as a real sun; and consider the rest as so many shining points, placed at equal distances from him in the firmament.

By the help of telescopes we discover thousands of stars which are invisible to the naked eye; and the better our glasses are, still the more become visible; so that we can set no limits either to their number or their distances. The celebrated Huygens carries his thoughts so far, as to believe it not impossible, that there may be stars at such inconceivable distances, that their light has not yet reached the Earth since its creation, although the velocity of light be a million of times greater than the velocity of a cannon-bullet: and Mr. Addison very justly observes, this thought is far from being extravagant, when we consider, that the universe is the work of infinite power, prompted by infinite goodness; having an infinite space to exert itself in; so that our imagination can set no bounds to it.

The Sun appears very bright and large in comparison of the fixed stars, because we keep constantly near the Sun, in comparison of our immense distance from the stars. For a spectator, placed as near to any star as we are to the Sun, would see that star a body as large and bright as the Sun appears to us; and a spectator, as far distant from the Sun as we are from the stars, would see the Sun as small as we see a star, divested of all its circumvolving planets; and would reckon it one of the stars in numbering them.

The stars, being at such immense distances from the Sun, cannot possibly receive from him so strong a light as they seem to have; nor any brightness sufficient to make them visible to us. For the Sun's rays must be so scattered and dissipated before they reach such remote objects; that they can never be transmitted back to our eyes, so as to render these objects visible by reflection. The stars therefore shine with their own native and unborrowed lustre, as the Sun does; and since each particular star, as well as the Sun, is confined to a particular portion of space, it is plain, that the stars are of the same nature with the Sun.

It is no ways probable, that the Almighty, who always acts with infinite wisdom, and does nothing in vain, should create so many glorious suns, fit for so many important purposes, and place them at such distances from one another, without proper objects near enough to be benefited by their influences. Whoever imagines they were created only to give a faint glimmering light to the inhabitants of this globe, must have a very superficial knowledge of astronomy, and a mean opinion of the Divine Wisdom: since, by an infinitely less exertion of creating power, the Deity could have given our Earth much more light by one single additional moon.

Instead then of one sun and one world only in the universe, as the unskilful in astronomy imagine, that science discovers to us such an inconceivable number of suns, systems and worlds, dispersed through boundless space, that if our Sun, with all the planets, moons, and comets belonging to it, were annihilated, they would be no more missed, by an eye that could take in the whole creation, than a grain of sand from the sea shore. The space they possess being comparatively so small, that it would scarce be a sensible blank in the universe, although Saturn, the outermost of our planets, revolves about the Sun in an orbit of 488,400,000 miles in circumference, and some of our comets make excursions upwards of 10,000,000,000 miles beyond Saturn's orbit; and yet, at that amazing distance, they are incomparably nearer to the Sun than to any of the stars; as is evident from their keeping clear of the attractive power of all the stars, and returning periodically by virtue of the Sun's attraction.

From what we know of our own system, it may be reasonably concluded, that all the rest are with equal wisdom contrived, situated, and provided with accommodations for rational inhabitants. Let us therefore take a survey of the system to which we belong; the only one accessible to us; and from thence we shall be the better enabled to judge of the nature and end of the other systems of the universe. For although there is almost an infinite variety in the parts of the creation which we have opportunities of examining, yet there is a general analogy running through and connecting all the parts into one scheme, one design, one whole!

And then, to an attentive considerer, it will appear highly probable, that the planets

ing in all sorts of directions. But of all these the periods of three only are known with any degree of certainty. The first of the three appeared in the years 1531, 1607, 1682, and 1758, and is expected to appear every 75th year. The second of them appeared in 1532 and 1661, and may be expected to return in 1789, and every 129th year afterwards. The third, having last appeared in 1680, and its period being no less than 575 years, cannot return until the year 2225. This comet, at its greatest distance, is about 11,200,000,000 miles from the Sun; and at its least distance from the Sun's centre, which is 49,000 miles, is within less than a third part of the Sun's semi-diameter from his surface. In that part of its orbit which is nearest the Sun, it flies with the amazing swiftness of 880,000 miles in an hour; and the Sun, as seen from it, appears an 100 degrees in breadth, consequently 40,000 times as large as he appears to us. The astonishing length that this comet runs out into empty space, suggests to our minds an idea of the vast distance between the Sun and the nearest fixed stars; of whose attractions all the comets must keep clear, to return periodically, and go round the Sun: and it shews us also, that the nearest stars, which are probably those that seem the largest, are as big as our Sun; and of the same nature with him; otherwise, they could not appear so large and bright to us as they do at such an immense distance.

The extreme heat, the dense atmosphere, the gross vapours, the chaotic state of the comets, seem at first sight to indicate them altogether unfit for the purposes of animal life, and a most miserable habitation for rational beings; and therefore some are of opinion, that they are so many hells for tormenting the damned with perpetual vicissitudes of heat and cold. But when we consider, on the other hand, the infinite power and goodness of the Deity; the latter inclining, the former enabling him to make creatures suited to all states and circumstances; that matter exists only for the sake of intelligent beings; and that wherever we find it, we always find it pregnant with life, or necessarily subservient thereto; the numberless species, the astonishing diversity of animals in earth, air, water, and even on other animals; every blade of grass, every tender leaf, every natural fluid, swarming with life;

and every one of these enjoying such gratifications as the nature and state of each requires: when we reflect moreover, that some centuries ago, till experience undeceived us, a great part of the earth was judged uninhabitable; the torrid zone, by reason of excessive heat, and the two frigid zones because of their intolerable cold; it seems highly probable, that such numerous and large masses of durable matter as the comets are, however unlike they be to our earth, are not destitute of beings capable of contemplating with wonder, and acknowledging with gratitude, the wisdom, symmetry, and beauty of the creation; which is more plainly to be observed in their extensive tour through the heavens, than in our more confined circuit. If farther conjecture is permitted, may we not suppose them instrumental in recruiting the expended fuel of the Sun; and supplying the exhausted moisture of the planets?—However difficult it may be, circumstanced as we are, to find out their particular destination, this is an undoubted truth, that wherever the Deity exerts his power, there he also manifests his wisdom and goodness.

The fixed stars, as appears from several considerations, are placed at an immense distance from us. Our Earth is at so great a distance from the Sun, that if seen from thence, it would appear no bigger than a point, although its circumference is known to be upwards of 25,000 miles. Yet that distance is so small, compared with the Earth's distance from the fixed stars, that if the orbit in which the Earth moves round the Sun were solid, and seen from the nearest star, it would likewise appear no bigger than a point, although it is at least 162,000,000 miles in diameter. For the Earth in going round the Sun is 162,000,000 miles nearer to some of the stars at one time of the year, than at another; and yet their apparent magnitudes, situations, and distances from one another still remain the same; and a telescope which magnifies above 200 times, does not sensibly magnify them: which proves them to be at least 400,000 times farther from us than we are from the Sun.

It is not to be imagined, that all the stars are placed in one concave surface, so as to be equally distant from us; but that they are scattered at immense distances from one another through unlimited space. So that there may be as great a distance

between

between any two neighbouring stars, as between our Sun and those which are nearest to him. Therefore an observer, who is nearest to any fixed star, will look upon it alone as a real sun; and consider the rest as so many shining points, placed at equal distances from him in the firmament.

By the help of telescopes we discover thousands of stars which are invisible to the naked eye; and the better our glasses are, still the more become visible; so that we can set no limits either to their number or their distances. The celebrated Huygens carries his thoughts so far, as to believe it not impossible, that there may be stars at such inconceivable distances, that their light has not yet reached the Earth since its creation, although the velocity of light be a million of times greater than the velocity of a cannon-bullet: and Mr. Addison very justly observes, this thought is far from being extravagant, when we consider, that the universe is the work of infinite power, prompted by by infinite goodness; having an infinite space to exert itself in; so that our imagination can set no bounds to it.

The Sun appears very bright and large in comparison of the fixed stars, because we keep constantly near the Sun, in comparison of our immense distance from the stars. For a spectator, placed as near to any star as we are to the Sun, would see that star a body as large and bright as the Sun appears to us: and a spectator, as far distant from the Sun as we are from the stars, would see the Sun as small as we see a star, divested of all its circumvolving planets; and would reckon it one of the stars in numbering them.

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planets of our system, together with their moons, are much of the same nature with our Earth, and destined for the like purposes. For they are solid opaque globes, capable of supporting animals and vegetables. Some of them are bigger, some less, and some much about the size of our Earth. They all circulate round the Sun, as the Earth does, in a shorter or longer time, according to their respective distances from him; and have, where it would not be inconvenient, regular returns of summer and winter, spring and autumn. They have warmer and colder climates, as the various productions of our Earth require: and, in such as afford a possibility of discovering it, we observe a regular motion round their axes like that of our Earth, causing an alternate return of day and night; which is necessary for labour, rest, and vegetation, and that all parts of their surfaces may be exposed to the rays of the Sun.

Such of the planets as are farthest from the Sun, and therefore enjoy least of his light, have that deficiency made up by several moons, which constantly accompany, and revolve about them, as our Moon revolves about the Earth. The remotest planet has, over and above, a broad ring encompassing it; which, like a lucid zone in the heavens, reflects the Sun's light very copiously on that planet: so that if the remotest planets have the Sun's light fainter by day than we, they have an addition made to it morning and evening by one or more of their moons, and a greater quantity of light in the night-time.

On the surface of the Moon, because it is nearer us than any other of the celestial bodies are, we discover a nearer resemblance of our Earth. For, by the assistance of telescopes, we observe the Moon to be full of high mountains, large valleys, deep cavities, and even volcanoes. These similarities leave us no room to doubt, but that all the planets and moons in the system are designed as commodious habitations for creatures endowed with capacities of knowing and adoring their beneficent Creator.

Since the fixed stars are prodigious spheres of fire, like our Sun, and at inconceivable distances from one another, as well as from us, it is reasonable to conclude, they are made for the same purposes that the Sun is; each to bestow light, heat, and vegetation on a certain number of inhabited planets, kept by gravitation within the sphere of its activity.

What an august! what an amazing conception, if human imagination can conceive it, does this give of the works of the Creator! Thousands of thousands of suns, multiplied without end, and ranged all around us, at immense distances from each other, attended by ten thousand times ten thousand worlds, all in rapid motion, yet calm, regular, and harmonious, invariably keeping the paths prescribed them; and these worlds peopled with myriads of intelligent beings, formed for endless progression in perfection and felicity.

If so much power, wisdom, goodness, and magnificence is displayed in the material creation, which is the least considerable part of the universe, how great, how wise, how good must he be, who made and governs the whole!

Ferguson.

§ 2. *Reflections on the Earth and Sea.*

It has been already observed, that the Earth ranks as a planet in the solar system; that its diameter is near 8,000 miles, and its circumference about 25,000. The surface of it is divided into land and water; the land is again divided into four parts, which are called, Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. The seas and unknown parts of its surface contain 160,522,026 square miles; the inhabited parts 38,990,569: Europe 4,456,065; Asia 10,768,823; Africa 9,654,807; America 14,110,874; in all 199,512,595; which is the number of square miles on the whole surface of our globe.

And if we examine it a little farther, what an admirable specimen have we of the divine skill and goodness! This globe is intended, not only for an habitation, but for a storehouse of conveniences. And if we examine the several apartments of our great abode, we shall find reason to be charmed with the displays both of nice economy and boundless profusion.

The surface of the ground, coarse as it may seem, is yet the laboratory where the most exquisite operations are performed. And though a multitude of generations have been accommodated by it, it still continues inexhaustible.

The unevenness of the ground, far from being a defect, heightens its beauty and augments its usefulness. Here it is scooped into deep and sheltered vales, almost constantly covered with verdure, which yields an easy couch and agreeable food to the various tribes of cattle. There it extends into a wide, open country, which annually bears a copious harvest; an harvest not only

only of the principal wheat, which is the staff of our life, but of the appointed barley, and various other grain, which are food for our animals.

The furrows vary their produce. They bring forth flax and hemp, which help us to some of the most necessary accommodations of life. These are wove into ample volumes of cloth, which fixed to the mast, give wings to our ships. It is twisted into vast lengths of cordage, which gives nerves to the crane, and sinews to the pulley, or else adhering to the anchor, secure the vessel, even amidst the driving tempest. It covers our tables with a graceful elegance, and surrounds our bodies with a cherishing warmth.

Yonder arise the hills, like a grand amphitheatre! Some are clad with mantling vines, some crowned with towering cedars, some ragged with mis-shapen rocks or yawning with subterraneous caves. And even those inaccessible crags, those gloomy cavities, are not only a refuge for wild goats, but sometimes for those of whom the world was not worthy.

At a greater distance the mountains penetrate the clouds, with their aspiring brows. Their sides arrest and condense the vapours as they float along. Their caverned bowels collect the dripping treasures, and send them gradually abroad by trickling springs: and hence the waters increasing roll down, till they have swept through the most extensive climes, and regained their native seas.

The vine requires a strong reflexion of the sun-beams and a large proportion of warmth. How commodiously do the hills and mountains minister to this purpose! May we not call those vast declivities the garden-walls of nature? These concentrate the solar fire, and completely ripen the grape! O that any should turn so valuable a gift of God into an instrument of sin!

What is nature but a series of wonders? That such a variety of fruits should rise from the insipid, sordid earth? I take a walk through my garden or orchard in December. There stand several logs of wood on the ground. They have neither sense nor motion; yet in a little time they are beautified with blossoms, they are covered with leaves, and at last loaded with fruit. I have wondered at the account of those prodigious engines, invented by Archimedes. But what are all the inventions of men, to those nice automata of nature?

The forest rears myriads of massy bodies, which, though neither gay with blossoms, nor rich with fruit, supply us with timber of various kinds. But who shall cultivate them? The toil were endless. See therefore the ever-wise and gracious ordination of Providence! They have no need of the spade or the pruning-knife. They want no help from man.

When sawed into beams, they sustain the roofs of our houses. They make carriages to convey our heaviest loads. Their substance is so pliant, that they are easily formed into every kind of furniture: yet their texture so solid, that they compose the most important parts of the largest engines. At the same time their pressure is so light, that they float upon the waters. Thus while they serve all the ends of architecture, and bestow numberless conveniences on the family, they constitute the very basis of navigation, and give being to commerce.

If we descend from the ground floor of our habitation into the subterraneous lodgments, we shall find there also the most exquisite contrivance acting in concert with the most profuse goodness. Here are various minerals of sovereign efficacy: beds fraught with metals of richest value: and mines, which yield a metal of a meaner aspect, but superior usefulness. Without the assistance of iron, what would become of all our mechanic skill? without this we could scarce either fix the mast, or drop the faithful anchor. We should scarce have any ornament for polite, or utensil for common life.

Here is an inexhaustible fund of combustible materials. These mollify the most stubborn bars. They melt even the most stubborn flint, and make it more ductile than the softest clay. By this means we are furnished with the most curious and serviceable manufacture in the world; which admits into our houses the chearing light, yet excludes the wind and rain: which gives new eyes to decrepit age, and more enlarged views to philosophy; bringing near what is immensely remote, and making visible what is immensely small.

Here are quarries stocked with stones, which do not sparkle like gems, but are more eminently useful. These form houses for peace, fortifications for war. These constitute the arches of the bridge, the arms of the mole or quay, which screen our ships from the most tempestuous

seas.

seas. These are comparatively soft in the bowels of the earth, but harden when in the open air. Was this remarkable peculiarity reversed, what difficulties would attend the labours of the mason? His materials could not be extracted from their bed, nor fashioned without infinite toil. And were his work completed, it could not long withstand the fury of the elements.

Here are various assortments and beds of clay, which however contemptible in its appearance, is abundantly more beneficial than the rocks of diamond or veins of gold: this is moulded into vessels of any shape and size: some so delicately fine as to suit the table of a prince; others so remarkably cheap, that they minister to the convenience of the poorest peasant: all so perfectly neat, as to give no disgust even to the nicest palate.

A multiplicity of other valuable stores is locked up in these ample vaults. But the key of all is given to industry, in order to produce each as necessity demands.

Which shall we most admire, the bounty or wisdom of our great Creator? How admirable is his precaution in removing these cumbrous wares from the surface, and bestowing them under the ground in proper repositories? Were they scattered over the surface of the soil, it would be embarrassed with the enormous load. Our roads would be blocked up, and scarce any room left for the operations of husbandry. Were they, on the other hand, buried at a great depth, it would cost us immense pains to procure them. Were they uniformly spread into a pavement for nature, universal barrenness must ensue: whereas at present we have a magazine of metallic, without lessening our vegetable treasures. Fossils of every kind enrich the bowels, verdure adorns the face of the earth.

Well then may even the inhabitants of heaven lift up their voice and sing, *Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty!* And is there not infinite reason for us to join this triumphant choir? Since all these things are to us, not only a noble spectacle, bright with the display of our Creator's wisdom, but likewise an inestimable gift, rich with the emanations of his goodness. The earth hath he set before the inhabitants of his glory: but he hath given it to the children of men. Has he not then an undoubted right to make that

tender demand, *My son, give me thine heart?*

The rocks which bound the sea, are here prodigiously high and strong, an everlasting barrier against both winds and waves. Not that the omnipotent engineer has any need of these here. It is true, they intervene, and not only repress the rolling billows, but speak the amazing Majesty of the Maker. But in other places the Creator shews, he is confined to no expedient. He bids a bank of despicable sand repel the most furious shocks of assaulting seas. *And though the waves test themselves, they cannot prevail; though they roar, yet they cannot pass over.*

Nay, is it not remarkable, that sand is a more effectual barrier against the sea than rock? Accordingly the sea is continually gaining upon a rocky shore: but it is continually losing on a sandy shore: unless where it sets in with an eddy. Thus it has been gaining, from age to age, upon the isle of Portland and the Land's End in Cornwall, undermining, throwing down, and swallowing up one huge rock after another. Mean time the sandy shores, both on our southern and western coasts, gain continually upon the sea.

Beneath the rocks frequently lies a smooth, level sand, almost as firm as a well-compacted causeway: insomuch that the tread of an horse scarce impresses it, and the waters never penetrate it. Without this wise contrivance the searching waves would insinuate into the heart of the earth; and the earth itself would in some places be hollow as an honey-comb, in others bibulous as a sponge. But this closely-cemented pavement is like claying the bottom of the universal canal: so that the returning tides only consolidate its substance, and prevent the sun from cleaving it with chinks.

Here the main rolls its surges from world to world. What a spectacle of magnificence and terror! How it fills the mind and amazes the imagination! It is the most august object under the whole heaven. What are all the canals on earth, to this immense reservoir? What are the proudest palaces on earth, to yonder concave of the skies? What the most pompous illuminations, to this source of day? They are a spark, an atom, a drop. Nay in every spark, and atom, and drop, that proceeds from the hand of the Almighty, there is the manifestation of a wisdom

and a power absolutely incomprehensible.

Let us examine a single drop of water, only so much as will adhere to the point of a needle. In this speck an eminent philosopher computes no less than thirteen thousand globules. And if so many thousands exist in so small a speck, how many in the unmeasured extent of the ocean? Who can count them? As well may we grasp the wind in our fist, or mete out the universe with our span.

Nor are these regions without their proper inhabitants, clothed in exact conformity to the climate: not in swelling wool, or buoyant feathers, but with as much compactness and as little superfluity as possible. They are clad, or rather sheathed in scales, which adhere close, and are laid in a kind of natural oil: than which apparel nothing can be more light, and at the same time nothing more solid. It hinders the fluid from penetrating their flesh: it prevents the cold from chilling their blood; and enables them to make their way through the waters, with the utmost facility. And they have each an air-bladder, a curious instrument, by which they rise to what height or sink to what depth they please.

It is impossible to enumerate the scaly herds. Here are animals of monstrous shapes, and amazing qualities. The upper jaw of the sword-fish is lengthened into a strong and sharp sword, with which (though not above sixteen feet long) he scruples not to engage the whale himself. The sun-fish is one round mass of flesh; only it has two fins, which act the part of oars. The polypus, with its numerous feet and claws, seems fitted only to crawl. Yet an excrescence rising on the back enables it to steer a steady course in the waves. The shell of the nautilus forms a kind of boat, and he unfurls a membrane to the wind for a sail. He extends also two arms, with which, as with oars, he rows himself along. When he is disposed to dive, he strikes sail, and at once sinks to the bottom. When the weather is calm, he mounts again, and performs his voyage without either chart or compass.

Here are shoals upon shoals of every size and form. Some lodged in their shells, seem to have no higher employ, than imbibing nutriment, and are almost rooted to the rocks on which they lie: while others shoot along the yielding flood, and range

the spacious regions of the deep. How various is their figure! The shells of some seem to be the rude production of chance, rather than of skill or design. Yet even in these we find the nicest dispositions. Uncouth as they are, they are exactly suited to the exigencies of their respective tenants. Some on the other hand are extremely neat. Their structure is all symmetry and elegance. No enamel is comparable to their polish. Not a room in all the palaces of Europe is so adorned as the bed-chamber of the little fish that dwells in mother of pearl. Where else is such a mixture of red, blue and green, so delightfully staining the most clear and glistering ground?

But what I admire more than all their beauty, is the provision made for their safety. As they have no speed to escape, so they have no dexterity to elude their foe. So that were they naked, they must be an easy prey to every free-booter. To prevent this, what is only cloathing to other animals, is to them a cloathing, an house, and a castle. They have a fortification which grows with them, and is a part of themselves. And by means of this they live secure amidst millions of ravenous jaws.

Here dwell mackerel, herring, and various other kinds, which when lean wander up and down the ocean: but when fat they throng our creeks and bays, or haunt the running streams. Who bids these creatures leave our shores when they become unfit for our service? Who rallies and recalls the undisciplined vagrants, as soon as they are improved into desirable food? Surely the furrow is signed, the summons issued, and the point of reunion settled, by a Providence ever indulgent to mankind, ever loading us with benefits.

These approach, while those of enormous size and appearance abandon our shores. The latter would fright the valuable fish from our coasts; they are therefore kept in the abysses of the ocean: just as wild beasts, impelled by the same overruling power, hide themselves in the recesses of the forest.

One circumstance relating to the natives of the deep is very astonishing. As they are continually obliged to devour one another for necessary subsistence, without extraordinary recruits, the whole watery race must soon be totally extinct. Were they to bring forth no more at a birth than land animals, the increase would be far too small

small for the consumption. The weaker species would soon be destroyed by the stronger, and the stronger themselves must soon after perish. Therefore to supply millions of animals with their food, and yet not depopulate the watery realms, the issue produced by every breeder is almost incredible. They spawn not by scores, but by millions: a single female is pregnant with a nation. Mr. Lewenhock counted in an ordinary cod, 9,384,000 eggs. By this amazing expedient, constant reparation is made, proportionable to the immense havock.

And as the sea abounds with animal inhabitants, so it does also with vegetable productions: some soft as wool, others hard as stone. Some rise like a leafless shrub, some are expanded in the form of a net; some grow with their heads downward, and seem rather hanging on, than springing from the juttings of the rocks. But as we know few particulars concerning these, I would only offer one remark in general. The herbs and trees on the dry land are fed by the juices that permeate the soil, and fluctuate in the air. For this purpose they are furnished with leaves to collect the one, and with roots to attract the other. Whereas the sea plants, having sufficient nourishment in the circumambient waters, have no need to detach roots into the ground, or forage the earth for sustenance. Instead therefore of penetrating, they are but just tacked to the bottom, and adhere to some solid substance only with such a degree of tenacity, as may secure them from being tost to and fro by the agitation of the waves.

We see from this and numberless other instances, what diversity there is in the operations of the great Creator. Yet every alteration is an improvement, and each new pattern has a peculiar fitness of its own.

Considered in another view, the sea is that grand reservoir which supplies the earth with its fertility: and the air and sun are the mighty engines, which work without intermission, to raise the water from this inexhaustible cistern. The clouds as aqueducts convey the genial stores along the atmosphere, and distribute them in seasonable and regular proportions, through all the regions of the globe.

How hardly do we extract a drop of perfectly sweet water from this vast pir of

brine? Yet the sun draws off every moment millions of tons in vaporous exhalations, which being securely lodged in the bottles of heaven, are sent abroad sweetened and refined, without the least brackish tincture, or bituminous sediment: sent abroad upon the wings of the wind, to distil in dews and rain, to ooze in fountains, to trickle along in rivulets, to roll from the sides of mountains, to flow in copious streams amidst burning deserts, and through populous kingdoms, in order to refresh and fertilize, to beautify and enrich every soil in every clime.

How amiable is the goodness, how amazing the power, of the world's adorable Maker! How amiable his goodness, in distributing so largely what is so extensively beneficial! That water, without which we can scarce perform any business, or enjoy any comfort, should stream by our houses, start up from the ground, drop down from the clouds! Should come from the ends of the earth, to serve us, from the extremities of the ocean! How amazing his power! That this boundless mass of fluid salt, so intolerably nauseous to the taste, should be the original spring, which quenches the thirst both of man and every animal! Doubtless the power by which this is effected, can make all things work together for our good.

Vast and various are the advantages which we receive from this liquid element. The waters glide on in spacious currents, which not only cheer the adjacent country, but by giving a brisk motion to the air, prevent the stagnation of the vapours. They pass by large cities, and quietly rid them of a thousand nuisances. But they are also fit for more honourable services. They enter the gardens of a prince, float in the canal, ascend in the jet d'eau, or fall in the grand cascade. In another kind they ply at our mills, toil incessantly at the wheel, and by working the largest engines, take upon them an unknown share of our fatigue, and save us both labour, time, and expence.

So forcibly do they act when collected. And how do they insinuate when detached? They penetrate the minutest tubes of a plant, and find a passage through all its meanders. With how much difficulty does the labourer push his way up the rounds of a ladder? While these carry their loads to a much greater height, and climb with the utmost ease. They convey nourishment

nourishment from the lowest fibres that are plunged in the earth, to the topmost twigs that wave amidst the clouds. Thus they furnish the whole vegetable world with necessary provision, by means of which *the trees of the Lord are full of sap, even the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted.* And notwithstanding their vast elevation and prodigious diffusion, not a single branch is destitute of leaves, nor a single leaf of moisture.

Besides the salutary and useful circulation of the rivers, the sea has a motion no less advantageous. Daily for five or six hours, it flows toward the land, and for the same time, retires to its inmost caverns. How great is the power that protrudes to the shores such an inconceivable weight of waters, without any concurrence from the winds, often in direct opposition to them? Which bids the mighty element revolve with the most exact punctuality? Did it advance with a lawless and unlimited swell, it might deluge whole continents. Was it irregular and uncertain in its approaches, navigation would be at a stand. But being constant in its stated period, and never exceeding its appointed bounds, it does no prejudice to the country and serves all the ends of traffic.

Is the sailor returned from his voyage? The flux is ready to convey his vessel to the very doors of the owner, without any hazard of striking on the rocks, or of being fastened in the sands. Has the merchant freighted his ship? The reflux bears it away with the utmost expedition and safety. Behold, O man, how highly thou art favoured by thy Maker! *He hath put all things in subjection under thy feet. All sheep and oxen, all the beasts of the field: the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea.* Yea, the surges of the sea are subservient to thee. Even these, wild and impetuous as they are, are ready to receive thy load, and like an indefatigable beast of burden, carry it to the place which thou chooseth.

What preserves this vast flood in perpetual purity? It receives the refuse and filth of the whole world. Whatever would defile the land and pollute the air, is transmitted to the ocean. How then is this receptacle of every nuisance kept clean, kept from contracting a noisome and pestilential taint? 'Tis partly by its incessant motion, and partly by its saltness. By the one it is secured from any internal

principle of corruption; by the other it works itself clear of any adventitious defilement.

Consider the sea in another capacity, and it connects the remotest realms of the universe, by facilitating the intercourse between their respective inhabitants. The ancients indeed looked on the ocean as an impassable gulph. But we find it just the reverse; not a bar of separation, but the great bond of union. For this purpose it is never exhausted, though it supplies the whole earth with rain: nor overflows, though all the rivers in the universe are perpetually augmenting its stores. By means of this we travel farther, than birds of the strongest pinions fly. We cross the flaming line, visit the frozen pole, and wing our way even round the globe.

What a multitude of ships are continually passing and repassing this universal thorough-fare! Whole harvests of corn, and vintages of wine, lodged in volatile store-houses, are waisted by the breath of heaven, to the very ends of the earth: waisted, enormous and unwieldy as they are, almost as speedily as the roe bounds over the hills.

Astonishing, that an element so unstable, should bear so immense a weight! That the thin air should drive on with such speed those vast bodies, which the strength of a legion could scarce move! That the air and water should carry to the distance of many thousand miles, what the united force of men and machines could scarce drag a single yard!

How are the mariners conducted thro' this fluid common, than which nothing is more wide or more wild? Here is no tract, no posts of direction, nor any hut where the traveller may ask his way. Are they guided by a pillar of fire? No, but by a mean and otherwise worthless fossil. Till this surprising stone was discovered, ships crept timorously along the coasts. But this guides them, when nothing but skies are seen above, and nothing but seas below. This gives intelligence that shines clear in the thickest darkness, and remains steady in the most tempestuous agitations. This emboldens us to launch into the heart of the ocean, and to range from pole to pole. By this means are imported to our islands the choice productions of every nation under heaven. Every tide conveys into our ports, the treasures of the remotest climes. And almost every private house

house in the kingdom, is accommodated from the four quarters of the globe. At the same time that the sea adorns the abodes of the rich; it employs the hands of the poor. What a multitude of people acquire a livelihood, by preparing commodities for exportation? And what a multitude by manufacturing the wares imported from abroad? Thus, though it is a false supposition, that the waters themselves are strained through subterranean passages into the inland countries, yet it is true, that their effects are transfused into every town, every hamlet, and every cottage.

§ 3. *Reflections on the Atmosphere.*

If we turn our thoughts to the atmosphere, we find a most curious and exquisite apparatus of air. This is a source of innumerable advantages; all which are fetched from the very jaws of ruin. To explain this. The pressure of the air on a person of a moderate size is equal to the weight of twenty thousand pounds. Tremendous consideration! Should an hoofs fall upon us with half that force, it would break every bone of our bodies. Yet so admirably has the Divine wisdom contrived the air, and so nicely counterpoised its dreadful power, that we suffer no manner of inconvenience; we even enjoy the load. Instead of being as a mountain on our loins, it is as wings to our feet, or sinews to our limbs. Is not this common ordination of Providence somewhat like the miracle of the burning bush? Well may we say unto God, O how terrible, yet how beneficent, art thou in thy works!

The air, though too weak to support our flight, is a thoroughfare for innumerable wings. Here the whole commonwealth of birds expatiate, beyond the reach of their adversaries. Were they to run upon the earth, they would be in ten thousand dangers, without strength to resist, or speed to escape them: whereas by mounting the skies, they are secure from peril, they scorn the horse and his rider. Some of them perching on the boughs, or soaring aloft, entertain us with their notes. Many of them yield us wholesome and agreeable food, and yet give us no trouble, put us to no expence; but till the time we want them, are wholly out of the way.

The air is charged also with several offices, absolutely needful for mankind. In our lungs it ventilates the blood,

qualifies its warmth, promotes the animal secretions. We might live even months, without the light of the sun, yea, or the glimmering of a star. Whereas, if we are deprived but a few minutes of this, we sicken, we faint, we die. The same universal nurse has a considerable share in cherishing the several tribes of plants. It transfuses vegetable vigour into the trunk of an oak, and a blooming gaiety into the leaves of a rose.

The air likewise conveys to our nostrils the extremely subtle effluvia which exhale from odoriferous bodies: particles so small, that they elude the most careful hand. But this receives and transmits the invisible vagrants, without losing even a single atom; entertaining us with the delightful sensations that arise from the fragrance of flowers, and admonishing us to withdraw from an unwholesome situation, to beware of pernicious food.

The air by its undulating motion conducts to our ear all the diversities of sound. While danger is at a considerable distance, this advertises us of its approach; and with a clamorous but kind importunity, urges us to provide for our safety.

The air wafts to our sense all the modulations of music, and the more agreeable entertainments of conversation. It distributes every musical variation with the utmost exactness, and delivers the message of the speaker with the most punctual fidelity: whereas, without this internuncio, all would be sullen and unmeaning silence. We should neither be charmed by the harmonious, nor improved by the articulate accents.

How gentle are the breezes of the air when unconfined! but when collected, they act with such immense force, as is sufficient to whirl round the hugest wheels, though clogged with the most incumbering loads. They make the ponderous millstones move as swiftly as the dancer's heel; and the massy beams play as nimbly as the musician's fingers.

In the higher regions there is an endless succession of clouds, fed by evaporations from the ocean. The clouds are themselves a kind of ocean, suspended in the air. They travel in detached parties, over all the terrestrial globe. They fructify, by proper communications of moisture, the spacious pastures of the weakly, and gladden with no less liberal showers the cottager's little spot.

Nay,

Nay, they satisfy the desolate and waste ground, and cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth: that the natives of the lonely desert, the herds which know no master's stall, may nevertheless experience the care of an all-supporting parent.

How wonderful! that pendant lakes should be diffused, fluid mountains heaped over our heads, and both sustained in the thinnest part of the atmosphere! How surprising is the expedient which without vessels of stone or brass, keeps such loads of water in a buoyant state! Job considered this with holy admiration. *Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds? How such ponderous bodies are made to hang in even poise, and hover like the lightest down? He bindeth up the waters in his thick cloud:* and the cloud, though nothing is more loose and fluid, becomes by his order tenacious, as casts of iron, is not rent under all the weight.

When the sluices are opened and the waters descend, one would think they should pour down in torrents. Whereas instead of this, which would be infinitely pernicious, they coalesce into globules, and are dispensed in gentle showers. They spread themselves as if strained through the orifices of the finest watering pot, and form those small drops of rain which the clouds distil upon man abundantly. Thus instead of drowning the earth, and sweeping away its fruits, they cherish universal nature, and (like their great Master) distribute their stores, to men, animals, vegetables, as they are able to bear them.

But beside waters, here are cantoned various parties of winds, mild or fierce, gentle or boisterous, furnished with breezy wings, to fan the glowing firmament, or else fitted to act as an universal besom, and by sweeping the chambers of the atmosphere to cleanse the fine aerial fluid. Without this wholesome agency of the winds, the air would stagnate and become putrid: so that all the great cities in the world, instead of being seats of elegance, would degenerate into sinks of corruption.

At sea, the winds swell the mariner's sails, and speed his course along the watery way. By land they perform the office of an immense seeds-man, scattering abroad the seeds of numberless plants, which, though the support of many animals, are too small for the management, or too mean for the attention of man.

Here are lightnings stationed, in act to spring whenever their piercing flash is

necessary, either to destroy the sulphureous vapours, or dislodge any other noxious matter, which might prejudice the delicate temperature of the ether, and obscure its more than chrystalline transparency.

Above all is situate a radiant and majestic orb, which enlightens and cheers the inhabitants of the earth: while the air, by a singular address, amplifies its usefulness. Its reflecting power augments that heat, which is the life of nature: its refracting power prolongs that splendor, which is the beauty of the creation.

I say, augments the heat. For the air is a cover which, without oppressing us with any perceivable weight, confines, reflects, and thereby increases the vivifying heat of the sun. The air increases this, much in the same manner as our cloaths give additional heat to our body: whereas when it is less in quantity, when it is attenuated, the solar heat is very sensibly diminished. Travellers on the lofty mountains of America, sometimes experience this to their cost. Though the climate at the foot of those vast mountains, is extremely hot and sultry, yet at the top the cold is so excessive, as often to freeze both the horse and rider to death. We have therefore great reason to praise God, for placing us in the commodious concavity, the cherishing wings of an atmosphere.

The emanations of light, though formed of inactive matter, yet (astonishing power of divine wisdom!) are refined almost to the subtilty of spirit, and are scarce inferior even to thought in speed. By which means they spread, with almost instantaneous swiftness, through an whole hemisphere: and though they fill whae'er they pervade, yet they straiten no place, embarrass no one, encumber nothing.

Every where indeed, and in every element, we may discern the footsteps of the Creator's wisdom. The spacious canopy over our heads is painted with blue; and the ample carpet under our feet is tinged with green. These colours, by their soft and cheering qualities, yield a perpetual refreshment to the eye. Whereas had the face of nature glistered with white, or glowed with scarlet, such dazzling hues, instead of cheering, would have faigued the sight. Besides, as the several brighter colours are interspersed, and form the pictures in this magnificent piece, the green and the blue make an admirable ground, which shews them all to the utmost advantage.

Had the air been much grosser, it would have dimmed the rays of the sun and darkened the day. Our lungs would have been clogged in their vital function, and men drowned or suffocated therein. Were it much more subtle, birds would not be able to wing their way through the firmament: neither could the clouds be sustained, in so thin an atmosphere. It would elude likewise the organs of respiration: we should gasp for breath with as much difficulty and as little success as fishes do, when out of their native element.

§ 4. *Reflections on the Vegetable Creation.*

As to vegetation itself, we are sensible all our reasonings about the wonderful operations of nature, are so full of uncertainty, that, as the wise man truly observes, *Hardly do we guess aright at the things that are upon earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before us.* This is abundantly verified in vegetable nature. For though its productions are so obvious to us, yet are we strangely in the dark concerning them, because the texture of their vessels is so fine and intricate, that we can trace but few of them, though assisted with the best microscopes. But although we can never hope to come to the bottom and first principle of things, yet may we every where see plain signatures of the hand of a Divine Architect.

All vegetables are composed of water and earth, principles which strongly attract each other: and a large portion of air, which strongly attracts when fixed, but strongly repels when in an elastic state. By the combination, action, and re-action of those few principles, all the operations in vegetables are effected.

The particles of air distend each ductile part, and invigorate their sap, and meeting with the other mutually attracting principles, they are by gentle heat and motion enabled to assimilate into the nourishment of the respective parts. Thus nutrition is gradually advanced, by the nearer and nearer union of these principles, till they arrive at such a degree of consistency, as to form the several parts of vegetables. And at length, by the flying off of the watery vehicle, they are compacted into hard substances.

But when the watery particles again soak into and disunite them, then is the union of the parts of vegetables dissolved, and they are prepared by putrefaction, to appear in some new form, whereby the

nutritive fund of nature can never be exhausted.

All these principles are in all the parts of vegetables. But there is more oil in the more exalted parts of them. Thus seeds abound with oil, and consequently with sulphur and air. And indeed as they contain the rudiments of future vegetables, it was necessary they should be stored with principles, that would both preserve them from putrefaction, and also be active in promoting germination and vegetation.

And as oil is an excellent preservative against cold, so it abounds in the sap of the more northern trees. And it is this by which the ever-greens are enabled to keep their leaves all the winter.

Leaves not only bring nourishment from the lower parts within the attraction of the growing fruit, (which like young animals is furnished with proper instruments to suck it thence) but also carry off the redundant watery fluid, while they imbibe the dew and rain, which contain much salt and sulphur: for the air is full of acid and sulphureous particles; and the various combinations of these, are doubtless very serviceable in promoting the work of vegetation. Indeed so fine a fluid as the air, is a more proper medium, wherein to prepare and combine the more exalted principles of vegetables, than the gross watery fluid of the sap. And that there is plenty of these particles in the leaves is evident, from the sulphureous exudations often found on their edges. To these refined aerial particles, not only the most racy, generous taste of fruits, but likewise the most grateful odours of flowers, yea and their beautiful colours, are probably owing.

In order to supply tender shoots with nourishment, nature is careful to furnish, at small distances, the young shoots of all sorts of trees, with many leaves throughout their whole length: which, as so many jointly acting powers, draw plenty of sap to them.

The like provision has nature made, in the corn, grass, and reed-kind: the leafy spires, which draw nourishment to each joint, being provided long before the stem shoots: the tender stems would easily break, or dry up, so as to prevent their growth, had not these scabbards been provided, which both support and keep them in a supple and ductile state.

The growth of a young bud to a shoot, consists in the gradual dilatation and extension of every part till it is stretched out

to its full length. And the capillary tubes still retain their hollowness, notwithstanding their being extended, as we see melted glass tubes remain hollow, though drawn out to the finest thread.

The pith of trees is always full of moisture while the shoot is growing, by the expansion of which, the tender, ductile shoot is distended in every part. But when each year's shoot is fully grown, then the pith gradually dries up. Mean time nature carefully provides for the growth of the succeeding year, by preserving a tender ductile part in the bud, replete with succulent pith. Great care is likewise taken to keep the parts between the bark and wood always supple with slimy moisture, from which ductile matter the woody fibres, vessels, and buds are formed.

The great variety of different substances in the same vegetable, proves, that there are peculiar vessels for conveying different sorts of nutriment. In many vegetables some of those vessels are plainly seen full of milky, yellow, or red nutriment.

Where a secretion is designed to compose an hard substance, viz. the kernel or seed of hard-stone fruits, it does not immediately grow from the stone, which would be the shortest way to convey nourishment to it. But the umbilical vessel fetches a compass round the concave of the stone, and then enters the kernel near its cone. By this artifice the vessel being much prolonged, the motion of the sap is thereby retarded, and a viscid nutriment conveyed to the seed, which turns to an hard substance.

Let us trace the vegetation of a tree, from the seed to its full maturity. When the seed is sown, in a few days it imbibes so much moisture, as to swell with very great force, by which it is enabled both to strike its roots down, and to force its stem out of the ground. As it grows up, the first, second, third, and fourth order of lateral branches shoot out, each lower order being longer than those immediately above them, not only as shooting first, but because inserted nearer the root, and so drawing greater plenty of sap. So that a tree is a complicated engine, which has as many different powers as it has branches. And the whole of each yearly growth of the tree, is proportioned to the whole of the nourishment they attract.

But leaves also are so necessary to promote its growth, that nature provides small,

thin expansions, which may be called primary leaves, to draw nourishment to the buds and young shoots, before the leaf is expanded. These bring nutriment to them in a quantity sufficient for their small demand: a greater quantity of which is afterward provided, in proportion to their need, by the greater expansion of the leaves. A still more beautiful apparatus we find in the curious expansions of blossoms and flowers, which both protect and convey nourishment to the embryo fruit and seeds. But as soon as the calix is formed into a small fruit, containing a minute, seminal tree, the blossom falls off, leaving it to imbibe nourishment for itself, which is brought within the reach of its function, by the adjoining leaves.

Let us proceed to make some additional reflections upon the vegetable kingdom.

All plants produce seeds: but they are entirely unfit for propagation, till they are impregnated. This is performed within the flower, by the dust of the antheræ falling upon the moist stigmata, where it bursts and sends forth a very subtle matter, which is absorbed by the style, and conveyed down to the seed. As soon as this operation is over, those organs wither and fall. But one flower does not always contain all these: often the male organs are on one, the female on another. And that nothing may be wanting, the whole apparatus of the antheræ and stigmata is in all flowers contrived with wonderful wisdom. In most, the stigmata surround the pistil, and are of the same height. But where the pistil is longer than the stigmata, the flowers recline, that the dust may fall into the stigmata, and when impregnated rise again, that the seeds may not fall out. In other flowers the pistil is shorter, and there the flowers preserve an erect situation. Nay, when the flowering season comes on, they become erect though they were drooping before. Lastly, when the male flowers are placed below the female, the leaves are very small and narrow, that they may not hinder the dust from flying upwards like smoke: and when in the same species one plant is male, and the other female, there the dust is carried in abundance by the wind from the male to the female. We cannot also without admiration observe, that most flowers expand themselves when the sun shines, and close when either rain, clouds, or evening is coming on, lest the genital dust should be conglutinated, or otherwise rendered useless.

less. Yet when the impregnation is over, they do not close, either upon showers, or the approach of evening.

For the scattering of seed, nature has provided numberless ways. Various berries are given for food to animals: but while they eat the pulp, they sow the seed. Either they disperse them at the same time: or if they swallow them, they are returned with interest. The mistletoe always grows on the other trees; because the thrush that eats the seeds of them, casts them forth with his dung. The junipers also, which fill our woods, are sown in the same manner. The cross-bill that lives on fir-cones, and the hawfinch which feeds on pine-cones, sow many of those seeds, especially when they carry the cone to a stone or stump, to strip off its scales. Swine likewise and moles, by throwing up the earth, prepare it for the reception of seeds.

The great Parent of all decreed that the whole earth should be covered with plants. In order to this he adapted the nature of each to the climate where it grows. So that some can bear intense heat, others intense cold. Some love a moderate warmth. Many delight in dry, others in moist ground. The Alpine plants love mountains whose tops are covered with eternal snow. And they blow and ripen their seeds very early, lest the winter should overtake and destroy them. Plants which will grow no where else, flourish in Siberia, and near Hudson's Bay. Grass can bear almost any temperature of the air: in which the good providence of God appears; this being so necessary all over the globe, for the nourishment of cattle.

Thus neither the scorching sun nor the pinching cold hinders any country from having its vegetables. Nor is there any soil which does not bring forth some. Pond-weed and water-lilies inhabit the waters. Some plants cover the bottom of rivers and seas: others fill the marshes. Some clothe the plains: others grow in the driest woods, that scarce ever see the sun. Nay, stones and the trunks of trees are not void, but covered with liverwort.

The wisdom of the Creator appears no where more than in the manner of the growth of trees. As the roots descend deeper than those of other plants, they do not rob them of nourishment. And as their stems shoot up so high, they are easily preserved from cattle. The leaves

falling in autumn guard many plants against the rigour of winter: and in the summer afford both them and us a defence against the heat of the sun. They likewise imbibe the water from the earth, part of which transpiring through their leaves, is insensibly dispersed, and helps to moisten the plants that are round about. Lastly, the particular structure of trees contributes very much to the propagation of insects. Multitudes of these lay their eggs upon their leaves, where they find both food and safety.

Many plants and shrubs are armed with thorns, to keep the animals from destroying their fruits. At the same time these cover many other plants, under their branches, so that while the adjacent grounds are robbed of all plants, some may be preserved to continue the species.

The mosses which adorn the most barren places, preserve the smaller plants, when they begin to shoot, from cold and drought. They also hinder the fermenting earth from forcing the roots of plants upward in the spring, as we see happen annually to trunks of trees. Hence few mosses grow in southern climates, not being necessary there to these ends.

Sea-matweed will bear no soil but pure sand. Sand is often blown by violent winds, so as to deluge as it were meadows and fields. But where this grows, it fixes the sand, and gathers it into hillocks. Thus other lands are formed, the ground increased, and the sea repelled, by this wonderful disposition of nature.

How careful is nature to preserve that useful plant grass! The more its leaves are eaten, the more they increase. For the Author of nature intended, that vegetables which have slender stalks and erect leaves should be copious and thick set, and thus afford food for so vast a quantity of grazing animals. But what increases our wonder is, that although grass is the principal food of such animals, yet they touch not the flower and seed-bearing stems, that so the seeds may ripen and be sown.

The caterpillar of the moth, which feeds upon grass to the great destruction thereof, seems to be formed in order to keep a due proportion between this and other plants. For grass when left to grow freely, increases to that degree as to exclude all other plants, which would consequently be extirpated, unless the insect sometimes prepared a place for them. And hence

hence it is, that more species of plants appear, when this caterpillar has laid waste the pasture the preceding year, than at any other time.

But all plants, sooner or later, must submit to death. They spring up, they grow, they flourish, they bear fruit, and having finished their course, return to the dust again. Almost all the black mould which covers the earth, is owing to dead vegetables. Indeed, after the leaves and stems are gone, the roots of plants remain: but these too at last rot and change into mould. And the earth thus prepared, restores to plants what it has received from them. For when seeds are committed to the earth, they draw and accommodate to their own nature the more subtle parts of this mould: so that the tallest tree is in reality nothing but mould wonderfully compounded with air and water. And from these plants when they die, just the same kind of mould is formed as gave them birth. By this means fertility remains continually uninterrupted: whereas the earth could not make good its annual consumption, were it not constantly recruited.

In many cases the crustaceous liverworts are the first foundation of vegetation. Therefore however despised, they are of the utmost consequence, in the œconomy of nature. When rocks first emerge out of the sea, they are so polished by the force of the waves, that hardly any herb is able to fix its habitation upon them. But the minute crustaceous liverworts soon begin to cover these dry rocks, though they have no nourishment but the little mould and imperceptible particles, which the rain and air bring thither. These liverworts dying turn into fine earth, in which a larger kind of liverworts strike their roots. These also die, and turn to mould: and then the various kinds of mosses find nourishment. Lastly, these dying yield such plenty of mould, that herbs and shrubs easily take root and live upon it.

That trees, when dry or cut down, may not remain useless to the world, and lie melancholy spectacles, nature hastens on their destruction in a singular manner. First the liverworts begin to strike root in them: afterward the moisture is drawn out of them, whence putrefaction follows. Then the mushroom-kind find a fit place to grow on, and corrupt them still more. A particular sort of beetle next makes himself a way between the bark and the wood.

Then a sort of caterpillar, and several other sorts of beetles, bore numberless holes through the trunk. Lastly, the woodpeckers come, and while they are seeking for insects, shatter the tree, already corrupted, and exceedingly hasten its return to the earth from whence it came. But how shall the trunk of a tree, which is emerged in water ever return to earth? A particular kind of worm performs this work, as sea-faring men well know.

But why is so inconsiderable a plant as thistles, so armed and guarded by nature? Because it is one of the most useful plants that grows. Observe an heap of clay, on which for many years no plant has sprung up: let but the seeds of a thistle fix there, and other plants will quickly come thither, and soon cover the ground: for the thistles by their leaves attract moisture from the air, and by their roots send it into the clay, and by that means not only thrive themselves, but provide a shelter for other plants.

Indeed, there is such a variety of wisdom, and profusion of goodness, displayed in every object of nature, even in those that seem useless or insignificant, and what is more, in many of those which to an ignorant and superficial observer, appear noxious, that it is past doubt to the true philosopher, nothing has been made in vain. That is a fine as well as pious observation of Sir John Pringle, founded on the experiments of Dr. Priestley, that no vegetable grows in vain, but that from the oak of the forest to the grass of the field, every individual plant is serviceable to mankind: if not always distinguished by some private virtue, yet making a part of the whole, which cleanses and purifies our atmosphere. In this the fragrant rose and deadly night-shade co-operate; nor is the herbage, nor the woods that flourish in the most remote and unpeopled regions, unprofitable to us, nor we to them; considering how constantly the winds convey to them our vitiated air, for our relief, and their nourishment. And if ever these salutary gales rise to storms and hurricanes, let us still trace and revere the ways of a beneficent being; who not fortuitously but with design, not in wrath but in mercy, thus shakes the waters and the air together, to bury in the deep those putrid and pestilential effluvia, which the vegetables upon the face of the earth had been insufficient to consume.

§ 5. *General Reflections and Observations on Beasts, Birds, Fishes, and other inferior parts of the Works of God.*

No part of nature is destitute of inhabitants. The woods, the waters, the depths of the earth, have their respective tenants; while the yielding air, and those tracts where man can never, but with much art and danger, ascend, are also passed through by multitudes of the most beautiful beings of the creation.

Every order of animals is fitted for its situation in life: but none more apparently than birds. Though they fall below beasts in the scale of nature, yet they hold the next rank, and far surpass fishes and insects, both in the structure of their bodies, and in their sagacity.

The body of man presents the greatest variety: beasts less perfectly formed, discover their defects in the simplicity of their conformation: the mechanism of birds is yet less complex: fishes are furnished with fewer organs still; while insects, more imperfect than all, fill up the chasm between animal and vegetable nature. Of man, the most perfect animal, there are but three or four species; the kinds of beasts are more numerous; birds are more various still; fishes yet more; but insects afford an immense variety.

As to the number of animals, the species of beasts, including also serpents, are not very numerous. Such as are certainly known and clearly described, are not above an hundred and fifty. And yet probably not many that are of any considerable greatness, have escaped the notice of the curious.

The species of birds, known and described, are near five hundred, and the species of fishes, including shell-fish, as many: but if the shell-fish are taken in, above six times the number. How many of each genus remain undiscovered, we cannot very nearly conjecture. But we may suppose, the whole sum of beasts and birds to exceed by a third part, and fishes by one half, those that are known.

The insects, taking in the exsanguious, both terrestrial and aquatic, may for number vie even with plants themselves. The exsanguious alone, by what Dr. Lister has observed and delineated, we may conjecture cannot be less, if not many more, than three thousand species. Indeed this computation seems much too low: for if there

are a thousand species in this island and the sea near it; and if the same proportion hold between the insects natives of England, and those of the rest of the world; the species of insects on the whole globe, will amount to ten thousand.

Now if the number of creatures even in this lower world, be so exceedingly great; how great, how immense must be the power and wisdom of him that formed them all! For as it argues far more skill in an artificer, to be able to frame both clocks and watches, and pumps, and many other sorts of machines, than he could display in making but one of these sorts of engines: so the Almighty declares more of his wisdom, in forming such a multitude of different sorts of creatures, and all with admirable and unproveable art, than if he had created but a few.

Again: The superiority of knowledge would be displayed, by contriving engines for the same purposes after different fashions, as the moving clocks or other engines by springs instead of weights: and the infinitely wise Creator, has shewn by many instances, that he is not confined to one only instrument, for the working one effect, but can perform the same thing by divers means. So though most flying creatures have feathers, yet hath he enabled several to fly without them; as the bat, one sort of lizard, two sorts of fishes, and numberless sorts of insects. In like manner, although the air bladder in fishes seems necessary for swimming; yet are many so formed as to swim without it, as first, the cartilaginous kind, which nevertheless ascend and descend at pleasure, although by what means we cannot tell: secondly, the cetaceous kind: the air which they receive into their lungs, in some measure answering the same end.

Yet again: Though God has tempered the blood and bodies of most fishes to their cold element, yet to shew he can preserve a creature as hot as beasts themselves in the coldest water, he has placed a variety of these cetaceous fishes in the northernmost seas. And the copious fat wherewith their bodies is inclosed, by reflecting the internal heat, and keeping off the external cold, keeps them warm even in the neighbourhood of the pole. Another proof that God can by different means produce the same effect, is the various ways of extracting the nutritious juice out of the aliment in various creatures.

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In man and beasts the food, first chewed, is received into the stomach, where it is concocted and reduced into chyle, and so evacuated into the intestines, where being mixed with the choler and pancreate juice, it is farther subtilized, and rendered so fluid, that its finer parts easily enter the mouth of the lacteal veins. In birds there is no chewing; but in such as are not carnivorous, it is immediately swallowed into the crop, or anti-stomach (which is observed in many, especially piscivorous birds) where it is moistened by some proper juice, and then transferred to the gizzard, by the working of whose muscles, assisted by small pebbles, which they swallow for that purpose, it is ground small, and so transmitted to the intestines.

In oviparous reptiles, and all kind of serpents, there is neither chewing nor comminution in the stomach, but as they swallow animals whole, so they void the skins unbroken, having extracted the nutritious juices. Here, by the bye, we may observe the wonderful delatibility of the throats and gullets of serpents. Two entire adult mice have been taken out of the stomach of an adder, whose neck was no bigger than one's little finger.

Fishes, which neither chew, nor grind their meat, do, by means of a corrosive juice in their stomach, reduce skin, bones, and all into chyle. And yet this juice shews no acidity to the taste. But how mild soever it tastes, it corrodes all animal substances, as aqua fortis does iron.

Several eminent men have been of opinion, that all brutes are mere machines. This may be agreeable enough to the pride of man; but it is not agreeable to daily observation. Do we not continually observe in the brutes which are round about us, a degree of reason? Many of their actions cannot be accounted for without it: as that commonly noted of dogs, that running before their masters, they will stop at the parting of the road, till they see which way their masters take. And when they have gotten what they fear will be taken from them, they run away and hide it. Nay, what account can be given, why a dog being to leap on a table, which he sees he cannot reach at once, if a stool or chair stands near it, first mounts that, and thence proceeds to the table? If he were mere clock-work, and his motion caused by a material spring, that spring being once set to work, would carry the machine in

a right line, towards the object that put it in motion.

Were it true, that brutes were mere machines, they could have no perception of pleasure or pain. But how contrary is this, to the doleful significations they give, when beaten or tormented? How contrary to the common sense of mankind? For do we not all naturally pity them, apprehending them to feel pain just as we do? Whereas no man is troubled to see a plant torn, or cut, or mangled how you please. And how contrary to Scripture? *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.* Prov. xii. 10. The former clause is usually rendered, a good man is merciful to his beast. And this is the true rendering, as appears by the opposite clause, that the wicked is cruel. Cruelty then may be exercised towards beasts. But this could not be, were they mere machines.

The natural instinct of all creatures, and the special provision made for some of the most helpless, do in a particular manner demonstrate the great Creator's care.

First, What an admirable principle is the natural affection of all creatures toward their young! By means of this, with what care do they nurse them up, thinking no pains too great to be taken for them, no danger too great to be ventured upon, for their guard and security! How will they caress them with their affectionate notes, put food into their mouths, suckle them, cherish and keep them warm, teach them to pick and eat, and gather food for themselves; and, in a word, perform the whole part of so many nurses, deputed by the sovereign Lord of the world, to help such young and helpless creatures till they are able to shift for themselves.

Other animals, insects in particular, whose offspring is too numerous for the parent's provision, are so generated as to need none of their care. For they arrive immediately at their perfect state, and so are able to shift for themselves. Yet thus far the parental instinct (equal to the most rational foresight) extends, that they do not drop their eggs any where, but in commodious places, suitable to their species. And some insinuate in their nests sufficient and agreeable food, to serve their young till they come to maturity.

And for the young themselves: as the parent is not able to carry them about, to coohe them and dandle them, as man doth:

doth: how admirably is it contrived, that they can soon walk about, and begin to shift for themselves! How naturally do they hunt for their teat, suck, pick and take in their proper food!

On the other hand, the young of man, (as their parent's reason is sufficient to help, to nurse, feed and clothe them) are born utterly helpless, and are more absolutely than any creature cast upon their parent's care.

Secondly, What admirable provision is made for some of the most helpless creatures, at a time when they must otherwise utterly perish! The winter is an improper season to afford food for insects and many other animals. When the fields, trees, and plants are naked, and the air is chilled with frost; what would become of such animals, whose tender bodies are impatient of cold, and who are nourished only by the produce of the spring or summer? To prevent their total destruction, the wise Preserver of the world has so ordered, that, in the first place, those who are impatient of cold, should have such a peculiar structure of body, as during that season not to suffer any waste, nor consequently need any recruit. Hence many sorts of birds, and almost all insects, pass the whole winter without any food: and most of them without any respiration. It seems all motion of the animal juices is extinct. For though cut in pieces they do not awake, nor does any fluid ooze out at the wound. This sleep therefore is little less than death, and their waking, than a resurrection: when the returning sun revives them and their food together.

The next provision is for such creatures as can bear the cold, but would want food. This is provided against in some, by a long patience of hunger, in others by their wonderful instinct, in laying up food before hand, against the approaching winter. By some of these, their little treasures are at the proper season well stocked with provisions. Yea, whole fields are here and there bespread with the fruits of the neighbouring trees laid carefully up in the earth, and covered safe by provident little animals.

And what a prodigious act is it of the Creator's indulgence to the poor, shiftless irrationals, that they are already furnished with such cloathing, as is proper to their place and business! with hair, with feathers, with shells, or with firm armature,

all nicely accommodated, as well to the element wherein they live, as to their several occasions there! To beasts, hair is a commodious cloathing; which, together with the apt texture of their skin, fits them in all weathers to lie on the ground, and to do their service to man. The thick and warm fleeces of others, are a good defence against the cold and wet, and also a soft bed: yea, and to many, a comfortable covering for their tender young.

All the animals near Hudson's Bay are clothed with a close, soft, warm fur. But what is still more surprising, and what draws all attentive minds to admire the wisdom and goodness of Providence is, that the very dogs and cats which are brought thither from England, on the approach of winter change their appearance, and acquire a much longer, softer, and thicker coat of hair than they originally had.

And as hair is a commodious dress for beasts, so are feathers for birds. They are not only a good guard against wet and cold, but nicely placed every where on the body, to give them an easy passage through the air, and to waft them through that thin medium. How curious is their texture for lightness, and withal close and firm for strength! and where it is necessary they should be filled, what a light, medullary substance are they filled with! so that even the strongest parts, far from being a load to the body, rather help to make it light and buoyant. And how curiously are the vanes of the feathers wrought with capillary filaments, neatly interwoven together, whereby they are sufficiently close and strong, both to guard the body against the injuries of the weather, and to empower the wings, like so many sails, to make strong impulses on the air in their flight.

No less curious is the cloathing of reptiles. How well adapted are the rings of some, and the contortions of the skin of others, not only to fence the body sufficiently, but to enable them to creep, to perforate the earth, and to perform all the offices of their state, better than any other covering!

Observe, for instance, the tegument of the earth-worms, made in the compleatest manner, for making their passage through the earth, wherever their occasions lead them. Their body is made throughout of small rings, which have a curious apparatus of muscles, that enable them with

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great strength to dilate, extend, or contract their whole body. Each ring is likewise armed with stiff, sharp prickles, which they can open at pleasure, or shut close to their body. Lastly, under their skin there is a slimy juice, which they emit as occasion requires, to lubricate the body, and facilitate their passage into the earth. By all these means they are enabled, with ease and speed, to work themselves into the earth, which they could not do, were they covered with hair, feathers, scales, or such cloathing as any of the other creatures.

How wisely likewise are the inhabitants of the waters clothed! The shells of some fishes, are a strong guard to their tender bodies, and consistent enough with their slow motion; while the scales and fins of others afford them an easy and swift passage through the waters.

Admirable likewise is the sagacity of brute animals, in the conveniency and method of their habitations. Their architectonic skill herein exceeds all the skill of man. With what inimitable art do some of these poor, untaught creatures, lay a parcel of rude ugly sticks or straws together? With what curiosity do they line them within, yea, wind and place every hair, feather, or lock of wool, to guard and keep warm the tender bodies, both of themselves and their young! And with what art do they thatch over and coat their nests without, to deceive the eye of the spectators, as well as to guard and fence them against the injuries of the weather!

Even insects, those little, weak, tender creatures, what artists are they in building their habitations! How does the bee gather its comb from various flowers, the wasp from solid timber! With what accuracy do other insects perforate the earth, wood, yea stone itself! Farther yet, with what care and neatness do most of them line their houses within, and seal them up and fence them without! How artificially do others fold up the leaves of trees; others glue light bodies together, and make floating houses, to transport themselves to and fro, as their various occasions require!

Another instance of the wisdom of Him that made and governs the world, we have in the balance of creatures. The whole surface of the terraqueous globe, can afford room and support, to no more

than a determinate number of all sorts of creatures. And if they should increase to double or treble the number, they must starve or devour one another. To keep the balance even, the great Author of nature hath determined the life of all creatures to such a length, and their increase to such a number, proportioned to their use in the world. The life indeed of some hurtful creatures is long; of the lion in particular. But then their increase is exceeding small: and by that means they do not overstock the world. On the other hand, where the increase is great, the lives of those creatures are generally short. And beside this, they are of great use to man, either for food or on other occasions. This indeed should be particularly observed, as a signal instance of divine providence, that useful creatures are produced in great plenty: others in smaller numbers. The prodigious increase of insects, both in and out of the waters, may exemplify the former observation. For innumerable creatures feed upon them, and would perish were it not for this supply. And the latter is confirmed by what many have remarked: that creatures of little use, or by their voraciousness, pernicious, either seldom bring forth, or have but one or two at a birth.

How remarkable is the destruction and reparation of the whole animal creation! The surface of the earth is the inexhaustible source whence both man and beast derive their subsistence. Whatever lives, lives on what vegetates, and vegetables, in their turn, live on whatever has lived or vegetated: it is impossible for any thing to live, without destroying something else. It is thus only that animals can subsist themselves, and propagate their species.

God in creating the first individual of each species, animal or vegetable, not only gave a form to the dust of the earth, but a principle of life, inclosing in each a greater or smaller quantity of organical particles, indestructible and common to all organized beings. These pass from body to body, supporting the life, and ministering to the nutrition and growth of each. And when any body is reduced to ashes, these organical particles, on which death hath no power, survive and pass into other beings, bringing with them nourishment and life. Thus every production, every renovation, every increase by generation

ration or nutrition, suppose a preceding destruction, a conversion of substance, an accession of these organical particles, which ever subsisting in an equal number, render nature always equally full of life.

The total quantity of life in the universe is therefore perpetually the same, And whatever death seems to destroy, it destroys no part of that primitive life, which is diffused through all organized beings. Instead of injuring nature, it only causes it to shine with the greater lustre. If death is permitted to cut down individuals, it is only, in order to make of the universe, by the reproduction of beings, a theatre ever crowded, a spectacle ever new. But it is never permitted to destroy the most inconsiderable species.

That beings may succeed each other, it is necessary that there be a destruction among them. Yet like a provident mother, nature in the midst of her inexhaustible abundance, has prevented any waste, by the few species of carnivorous animals, and the few individuals of each species; multiplying at the same time both the species and individuals of those that feed on herbage. In vegetables she seems to be profuse, both with regard to the number and fertility of the species.

In the sea indeed all the species are carnivorous. But though they are perpetually preying upon, they never destroy each other, because their fruitfulness is equal to their depredation.

Thus thro' successive ages stands

him fast thy providential care!

Pleas'd with the works of thine own hands

Thou dost the wastes of time repair.

Let us add a few more reflections on the world in general. The same wise Being, who was pleased to make man, prepared for him also an habitation so advantageously placed, that the heavens and the rest of the universe might serve it both as an ornament and a covering. He constructed likewise the air which man was to breathe, and the fire which was to sustain his life. He prepared also metals, salts, and all terrestrial elements to renew and maintain throughout all ages, whatever might be on any account necessary for the inhabitants of the earth.

The same Divine Ruler is manifest in all the objects that compose the universe. It is he that caused the dry land to appear, above the surface of the ocean, gauged the

capacity of that amazing reservoir, and proportioned it to the fluid it contains. He collects the rising vapours, and causes them to distil in gentle showers. At his command the sun darts his enlivening rays, and the winds scatter the noxious effluvia, which, if they were collected together, might destroy the human race.

He formed those hills and lofty mountains which receive and retain the water within their bowels, in order to distribute it with œconomy to the inhabitants of the plains, and to give it such an impulse, as might enable it to overcome the unevenness of the lands, and convey it to the remotest habitations.

He spread under the plains beds of clay, or compact earths, there to stop the waters, which, after a great rain, make their way through innumerable little passages. These sheets of water frequently remain in a level with the neighbouring rivers, and fill our wells with their redundancy, or as those subside, flow into them again.

He proportioned the variety of plants in each country, to the exigencies of the inhabitants, and adapted the variety of the soils, to the nature of those plants.

He endued numerous animals with mild dispositions, to make them the domestics of man; and taught the other animals to govern themselves, with an aversion to dependance, in order to continue their species without loading man with too many cares.

If we more nearly survey the animal and vegetable world, we find all animals and plants have a certain and determined form, which is invariably the same. So that if a monster ever appear, it cannot propagate its kind, and introduce a new species into the universe. Great indeed is the variety of organized bodies. But their number is limited. Nor is it possible to add a new genus either of plants or animals, to those of which God has created the germina, and determined the form.

The same Almighty power has created a precise number of simple elements, essentially different from each other, and invariably the same. By these he varies the scene of the universe, and at the same time prevents its destruction, by the very immutability of the nature and number of these elements, so that the world is for ever changed, and yet eternally the same.

Yet if we would account for the origin

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of these elements, we are involved in endless uncertainty. We can only say, he who has appointed their different uses in all ages, has rendered those uses infallible, by the impossibility of either destroying or increasing them.

Herein we read the characters of his power, which is invariably obeyed; of his wisdom, which has abundantly provided for every thing; and of his tender kindness toward man, for whom he has provided services equally various and infallible. It is an additional proof of his continual care of his creatures, that though every thing be composed of simple elements, all placed within our reach, yet no power is able to destroy the least particle of them. Nothing but the same cause which was able to give them birth, can annihilate them, or change their nature. In truth, the design and will of the Creator is the only physical cause of the general oeconomy of the world: the only physical cause of every organized body, every germen that flourishes in it; the only physical cause of every minute elementary particle, which enters into the composition of all.

We must not then expect ever to have a clear and full conception of effects, natures, and causes. For where is the thing which we can fully conceive? We can no more comprehend either what body, in general is, or any particular body, suppose a mass of clay, or a ball of lead, than what a spirit, or what God is.

If we turn our eyes to the minutest parts of animal life, we shall be lost in astonishment! and though every thing is alike easy to the Almighty, yet to us it is matter of the highest wonder, that in those specks of life, we find a greater number of members to be put in motion, more wheels and pollies to be kept going, and a greater variety of machinery, more elegance and workmanship (so to speak) in the composition, more beauty and ornament in the finishing, than are seen in the enormous bulk of the crocodile, the elephant, or the whale. Yea, they seem to be the effects of an art, as much more exquisite, as the movements of a watch are, than those of a coach or a wagon.

Hence we learn, that an atom to God is as a world, and a world but as an atom; just as to him, *one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years but as one day*. Every species likewise of these animalculæ may serve

to correct our pride, and shew how inadequate our notions are, to the real nature of things. How extremely little can we possibly know, either of the largest or smallest part of the creation? We are furnished with organs capable of discerning, to a certain degree of great or little only. All beyond is as far beyond the reach of our conceptions, as if it had never existed.

Proofs of a wise, a good, and powerful Being are indeed deducible from every thing around us: but the extremely great and the extremely small, seem to furnish us with those that are most convincing. And perhaps, if duly considered, the fabric of a world, and the fabric of a mite, may be found equally striking and conclusive.

Glasses discover to us numberless kinds of living creatures, quite indiscernible to the naked eye. And how many thousand kinds may there be, gradually decreasing in size, which we cannot see by any help whatever? Yet to all these we must believe God has not only appointed the most wise means for preservation and propagation, but has adorned them with beauty equal, at least, to any thing our eyes have seen.

In short, the world around us is the mighty volume wherein God has declared himself. Human languages and characters are different in different nations. And those of one nation are not understood by the rest. But the book of nature is written in an universal character, which every man may read in his own language. It consists not of words, but things, which picture out the divine perfections. The firmament every where expanded, with all its starry host, declares the immensity and magnificence, the power and wisdom of its Creator. Thunder, lightning, storms, earthquakes and volcanoes, shew the terror of his wrath. Seasonable rains, sun-shine and harvest, denote his bounty and goodness, and demonstrate how *he opens his hand, and fills all living things with plenteousness*. The constantly succeeding generations of plants and animals, imply the eternity of their first cause. Life, subsisting in millions of different forms, shews the vast diffusion of his animating power, and death the infinite disproportion between him and every living thing.

Even the actions of animals are an eloquent and a pathetic language. Those that want the help of man have a thousand engaging ways, which, like the voice of God speaking to his heart, command him

to preserve and cherish them. In the mean time the motions or looks of those which might do him harm, strike him with terror, and warn him, either to fly from or arm himself against them. Thus it is, that every part of nature directs us to nature's God.

The reader will easily excuse our concluding this chapter also, with an extract from Mr. Hervey.

In all the animal world, we find no tribe, no individual neglected by its Creator. Even the ignoble creatures are most wisely circumstanced and most liberally accommodated.

They all generate in that particular season, which supplies them with a stock of provisions, sufficient not only for themselves, but for their increasing families. The sheep yearn, when there is herbage to fill their udders, and create milk for their lambs. The birds hatch their young, when new-born insects swarm on every side. So that the caterer, whether it be the male or the female parent, needs only to alight on the ground, or make a little excursion into the air, and find a feast ready dressed for the mouths at home.

Their love to their offspring, while they are helpless, is invincibly strong: whereas the moment they are able to shift for themselves it vanishes as though it had never been. The hen that marches at the head of her little brood, would fly at a mastiff in their defence; yet within a few weeks, she leaves them to the wide world, and does not even know them any more.

If the God of Israel inspired Bezaleel and Aholiab with wisdom and knowledge in all manner of workmanship, the God of nature has not been wanting, in his instructions to the fowls of the air. The skill with which they erect their houses, and adjust their apartments is inimitable. The caution with which they hide their abodes from the searching eye, or intruding hand, is admirable. No general, though fruitful in expedients, could build so commodious a lodgement. Give the most celebrated artificer the same materials, which these weak and unexperienced creatures use. Let a Jones or a Demoivre have only some rude stones or ugly sticks, a few bits of dirt or scraps of hair, a lock of wool, or a coarse sprig of moss: and what works could they produce? We extol the commander, who knows how to take advantage of the ground; who by every

circumstance embarrasses the forces of his enemy, and advances the success of his own. Does not this praise belong to the feathered leaders? Who fix their pensile camp, on the dangerous branches that wave aloft in the air, or dance over the stream? By this means the vernal gales rock their cradle, and the murmuring waters lull the young, while both concur to terrify their enemies, and keep them at a distance. Some hide their little household from view, amidst the shelter of intangled furze. Others remove it from discovery, in the centre of a thorny thicket. And by one stratagem or another they are generally as secure, as if they intrenched themselves in the earth.

If the swan has large sweeping wings, and a copious stock of feathers, to spread over his callow young, the wren makes up by contrivance what is wanting in her bulk. Small as she is, she will be obliged to nurse up a very numerous issue. Therefore with surprising judgment she designs, and with wonderful diligence finishes her nest. It is a neat oval, bottomed and vaulted over with a regular concave: within made soft with down, without thatched with moss, only a small aperture left for her entrance. By this means the enlivening heat of her body is greatly increased during the time of incubation. And her young no sooner burst the shell, than they find themselves screened from the annoyance of the weather, and comfortably reposed, till they gather strength in the warmth of a bagnio.

Perhaps we have been accustomed to look upon insects, as so many rude scraps of creation, but if we examine them with attention, they will appear some of the most polished pieces of divine workmanship. Many of them are decked with the richest finery. Their eyes are an assemblage of microscopes: the common fly, for instance, who, surrounded with enemies, has neither strength to resist, nor a place of retreat to secure herself. For this reason she has need to be very vigilant, and always upon her guard. But her head is so fixed that it cannot turn to see what passes, either behind or around her. Providence therefore has given her, not barely a retinue, but more than a legion of eyes: inasmuch that a single fly is supposed to be mistress of no less than eight thousand. By the help of this truly amazing apparatus, she sees on every side, with the

utmost

utmost ease and speed, though without any motion of the eye, or flexion of the neck.

The dress of insects is a vesture of resplendent colours set with an arrangement of the brightest gems. Their wings are the finest expansion imaginable, compared to which lawn is as coarse as sack-cloth. The cases, which enclose their wings, glitter with the finest varnish, are scooped into ornamental flutings, are studded with radiant spots, or pinked with elegant holes. Not one but is endued with weapons to seize their prey, and dexterity to escape their foe, to dispatch the business of their station, and enjoy the pleasure of their condition.

What if the elephant is distinguished by his huge proboscis? The use of this is answered in these his meanest relations, by their curious feelers, remarkable, if not for their enormous size, yet for their ready flexion and quick sensibility. By these they explore their way in the darkest road: by these they discover and avoid, whatever might defile their neat apparel, or endanger their tender lives.

Every one admires the majestic horse. With how rapid career does he bound along the plain! Yet the grass-hopper springs forward with a bound abundantly more impetuous. The ant too, in proportion to his size, excels him both in swiftness and strength: and will climb precipices, which the most courageous courser dares not attempt to scale. If the snail moves more slowly, she has however no need to go the same way twice over: because whenever she departs, wherever she removes, she is always at home.

The eagle, it is true, is privileged with pinions that out-strip the wind. Yet neither is that poor outcast, the grovelling mole, disregarded by Divine Providence. Because she is to dig her cell in the earth, her paws serve for a pick-axe and spade. Her eye is sunk deep into its socket, that it may not be hurt by her rugged situation. And as it needs very little light, she has no reason to complain of her dark abode. So that her subterranean habitation, which some might call a dungeon, yields her all the safety of a fortified castle, and all the delights of a decorated grove.

Even the spider, though abhorred by man, is the care of all-sustaining heaven. She is to support herself by trepanning the wandering fly. Suitably to her employ, she has bags of glutinous moisture.

From this she spins a clammy thread, and weaves it into a tenacious net. This she spreads in the most opportune place. But knowing her appearance would deter him from approaching, she then retires out of sight. Yet she constantly keeps within distance; so as to receive immediate intelligence when any thing falls into her toils, ready to spring out in the very instant. And it is observable, when winter chills the air, and no more insects rove through it, knowing her labour would be in vain, she leaves her stand, and discontinues her work.

I must not forget the inhabitants of the hive. The bees subsist as a regular community. And their indulgent Creator has given them all implements necessary either for building their combs, or composing their honey. They have each a portable vessel, in which they bring home their collected sweets: and they have the most commodious store-houses, wherein they deposit them. They readily distinguish every plant, which affords materials for their business: and are complete practitioners in the arts of separation and refinement. They are aware that the vernal bloom and summer sun continue but for a season. Therefore they improve to the utmost every shining hour, and lay up a stock sufficient to supply the whole state, till their flowery harvest returns.

If the master of this lower creation is ennobled with the powers of reason, the meanest classes of sensitive beings, are endued with the faculty of instinct: a sagacity which is neither derived from observation, nor waits the finishing of experience: which without a tutor teaches them all necessary skill, and enables them without a pattern to perform every needful operation. And what is more remarkable, it never misleads them, either into erroneous principles, or pernicious practices: nor ever fails them in the most nice and difficult of their undertakings.

Let us step into another element, and just visit the watery world. There is not one among the innumerable myriads, that swim the boundless ocean, but is watched over by the sovereign eye, and supported by his Almighty hand. He has condescended even to beautify them. He has given the most exact proportion to their shape, the gayest colours to their skin, and a polished surface to their scales. The eyes of some are surrounded with a scarlet circle:

circle: the back of others diversified with crimson stains. View them when they glance along the stream, or when they are fresh from their native brine, the silver is not more bright, nor the rainbow more glowing than their vivid, glossy hues.

But as they have neither hands nor feet, how can they help themselves, or escape their enemies? By the beneficial, as well as ornamental furniture of fins. These when expanded, like masts above, and ballasts below, poise their floating bodies, and keep them steadily upright. They are likewise greatly assisted by the flexibility and vigorous activity of their tails: with which they shoot through the paths of the sea, swifter than a vessel with all its sails. But we are lost in wonder at the exquisite contrivance and delicate formation of their gills: by which they are accommodated, even in that dense medium, with the necessities of respiration! A piece of mechanism this, indulged to the meanest of the fry: yet infinitely surpassing, in the fineness of its structure and operation, whatever is curious in the works of art, or commodious in the palaces of princes.

§ 6. *Observations on the difference between things: natural and artificial.*

If we examine the finest needle by the microscope, the point of it appears about a quarter of an inch broad, and its figure neither round nor flat, but irregular and unequal. And the surface, however smooth and bright it may seem to the naked eye, is then seen full of raggedness, holes, and scratches, like an iron bar from the forge. But examine in the same manner the sting of a bee, and it appears to have in every part a polish most amazingly beautiful, without the least flaw, or inequality, and ends in a point too fine to be discerned by any glass whatever: and yet this is only the outward sheath of far more exquisite instruments.

A small piece of the finest lawn, from the distance and holes between its threads, appears like a lattice or hurdle. And the threads themselves seem coarser than the yarn wherewith ropes are made for anchors. Fine Brussels lace will look as if it were made of a thick, rough, uneven hair-line, interwoven or clotted together in a very awkward and unartful manner. But a silkworm's web on the nicest examination appears perfectly smooth and shining, and as much finer than any spinster in the world

can make, as the smallest twine is than the thickest cable. A pod of this silk winds into nine hundred and thirty yards. And as it is two threads twisted together all the length, so it really contains one thousand eight hundred and sixty; and yet weighs but two grains and an half. What an exquisite fineness! and yet this is nothing to the silk that issued from the worm's mouth when newly hatched.

The smallest dot which can be made with a pen, appears through a glass, a vast irregular spot, rough, jagged, and uneven about all its edges. The finest writing (such as the Lord's Prayer in the compass of a silver penny) seems as shapeless and uncouth as if wrote in Runic characters. But the specks of moths, beetles, flies, and other insects, are most accurately circular: and all the lines and marks about them are drawn to the utmost possibility of exactness.

Our finest miniature paintings appear before a microscope, as mere daubings, plaistered on with a trowel. Our smoothest polishings are shown to be mere roughness, full of gaps and flaws. Thus do the works of art sink, upon an accurate examination. On the contrary, the nearer we examine the works of nature, even in the least and meanest of her productions, the more we are convinced, nothing is to be found there but beauty and perfection. View the numberless species of insects, what exactness and symmetry shall we find in all their organs! What a profusion of colouring, azure, green, vermillion; what fringe and embroidery on every part! How high the finishing, how inimitable the polish we every where behold! Yea, view the animalculæ, invisible to the naked eye, those breathing atoms so small, they are almost all workmanship: in them too we discover the same multiplicity of parts, diversity of figures, and variety of motions, as in the largest animals. How amazingly curious must the internal structure of these creatures be! how minute the bones, joints, muscles, and tendons! how exquisitely delicate the veins, arteries, nerves! what multitudes of vessels and circulations must be contained in this narrow compass! and yet all have sufficient room for their several offices, without interfering with each other!

The same regularity and beauty is found in vegetables. Every stalk, bud, flower, and seed, displays a figure, a proportion,

portion, an harmony, beyond the reach of art. There is not a weed whose every leaf does not shew a multiplicity of pores and vessels curiously disposed for the conveyance of juices, to support and nourish it, and which is not adorned with innumerable graces to embellish it.

But some may ask, to what purpose has nature bestowed so much expence on so insignificant creatures? I answer, this very thing proves they are not so insignificant, as we fondly suppose. This beauty is given them either for their own sake, that they themselves may be delighted with it, or for ours, that we may observe in them the amazing power and goodness of the Creator. If the former, they are of consequence in the account of their Maker, and therefore deserve our regard. If the latter, then it is certainly our duty to take notice of, and admire them.

In short, the whole universe is a picture, in which are displayed the perfections of the Deity. It shews not only his existence, but his unity, his power, his wisdom, his independence, his goodness. His unity appears in the harmony we cannot but see in all the parts of nature; in that one simple end to which they are directed, and the conformity of all the means thereto. On every side we discern either simple elements or compound bodies, which have all different actions and offices. What the fire inflames, the water quenches: what one wind freezes, another thaws. But these and a thousand other operations, so seemingly repugnant to each other, do nevertheless all concur, in a wonderful manner, to produce one effect. And all are so necessary to the main design, that were the agency of any one destroyed, an interruption of the order and harmony of the creation must immediately ensue.

Suppose, for instance, the wind to be taken away, and all society is in the utmost disorder. Navigation is at a stand, and all our commerce with foreign nations destroyed. On the other hand the vapours raised from the sea would remain suspended, just where they rose. Consequently we should be deprived of that useful covering the clouds, which now screens us from the scorching heat: yea, and of the fruitful rains. So our land would be parched up, the fruits of the earth wither, animals die, through hunger and thirst, and all nature languish and

droop. All the parts of nature therefore were constituted for the assistance of each other, and all undeniably prove the unity of their Omnipotent Creator.

His power appears in the whole frame of creation, and his wisdom in every part of it. His independence is pointed out in the inexhaustible variety of beasts, birds, fishes and insects: and his goodness, in taking care of every one of these, *opening his hand, and filling all things living with plentifulness.*

Every thing is calculated by Divine Wisdom, to make us wiser and better. And this is the substance of true philosophy. We cannot know much. In vain does our shallow reason attempt to fathom the mysteries of nature, and to pry into the secrets of the Almighty. His ways are past finding out. The eye of a little worm is a subject capable of exhausting all our boasted speculations. But we may love much. And herein we may be assisted by contemplating the wonders of his creation. Indeed he seems to have laid the highest claim to this tribute of our love, by the care he has taken to manifest his goodness in the most conspicuous manner, while at the same time he has concealed from us the most curious particulars, with regard to the essences and structure of his works. And to this our ignorance it is owing, that we fancy so many things to be useless in the creation. But a deep sense of his goodness will satisfy all our doubts, and resolve all our scruples.

§ 7. *Considerations on the Nature of Man.*

Near 6000 years are elapsed since the creation. At first there were only two human beings. When the flood came upon the earth, which was 1656 years from the beginning of time, these two had increased, according to a moderate computation, to the number of 10,737,418,240 persons. From Noah and his family are sprung the present race of men, and are generally supposed to be only about 353,000,000 persons.

If we proceed from the number to the nature of reasonable beings, we shall find much of the wisdom and goodness of God displayed in the structure of the human body, as well as in the all-directing mind.

Let us begin with the less adorned, but more solid parts, those which support, and which contain the rest. First, you have a system

system of bones, cast in a variety of moulds, in a variety of sizes: all strong, that they may bear up the machine, yet light, that they may not weigh us down: bored with an inward cavity to contain the moistening marrow, and perforated with fine ducts, to admit the nourishing vessels. Insensible themselves, they are covered with a membrane, exquisitely sensible, which warns them of, and secures them from the annoyance of any hurtful friction; and also preserves the muscles from being fretted in their action, by the hard and rough substance of the bone. They are largest at the extremities, that they may be joined more firmly, and not so easily dislocated. The manner of their articulation is truly admirable, and remarkably various: yet never varied without demonstrating some wise design, and answering some valuable end. Frequently when two are united, the one is nicely rounded and capped with a smooth substance; the other is scooped into an hollow of the same dimensions to receive it. And both are lubricated with an unctuous fluid, to facilitate the rotation.

The feet compose the firmest pedestal, infinitely beyond all that statuary can accomplish; capable of altering its form, and extending its size, as different circumstances require. They likewise contain a set of the nicest springs, which help to place the body in a variety of attitudes, and qualify it for a multiplicity of motions. The undermost part of the heel, and the extremity of the sole, are shod with a tough insensible substance: a kind of natural sandal, which never wears out, never wants repair: and which prevents an undue compression of the vessels by the weight of the body. The legs and thighs are like stately columns, so articulated that they are commodious for walking, and yet do not obstruct the easy posture of sitting. The legs swell out towards the top with a gentle projection, and are nearly wrought off towards the bottom: a variation which lessens their bulk, while it increases their beauty.

The ribs, turned into a regular arch, are gently moveable, for the act of respiration. They form a safe lodgement for the lungs and heart, some of the most important organs of life. The back bone is designed, not only to strengthen the body, and sustain its most capacious store-rooms, but also to bring down the continuation of the brain, usually termed the spinal mar-

row. It both conveys and guards this silver cord, as Solomon terms it, and by commodious outlets transmits it to all parts. Had it been only strait and hollow, it might have served these purposes. But then the joints must have been inflexible: to avoid which, it consists of very short bones, knit together by cartilages. This peculiarity of structure gives it the pliancy of an osier, with the firmness of an oak. By this means it is capable of various inflections, without bruising the soft marrow, or diminishing that strength which is necessary to support all the upper stories. Such a formation in any other of the solids, must have occasioned great inconvenience. Here it is unspeakably useful, a masterpiece of creating skill.

The arms are exactly proportioned to each other, to preserve the equilibrium of the structure. These bring the guards that defend, and the ministers that serve the whole body, are fitted for the most diversified and extensive operations: firm with bone, yet not weighty with flesh, and capable of performing all useful motions. They bend inwards and turn outwards: they move upwards or downwards. They wheel about in whatever direction we please. To these are added the hands, terminated by the fingers, not of the same length, nor of equal bigness, but in both respects different, which gives the more beauty, and far greater usefulness. Were they all flesh, they would be weak: were they one entire bone, they would be utterly inflexible: but consisting of various little bones and muscles, what shape can they not assume? Being placed at the end of the arm, the sphere of their action is exceedingly enlarged. Their extremities are an assemblage of fine tendinous fibres, acutely sensible: which notwithstanding are destined to almost incessant employ, and frequently among rugged objects. For this reason they are overlaid with nails, which preserve them from any painful impressions.

In the hand we have a case of the finest instruments. To those we owe those beautiful statues, this melodious trumpet. By the strength of the hand the tallest firs fall, and the largest oaks descend from the mountains. Fashioned by the hand they are a floating warehouse, and carry the productions of art and nature from Britain to Japan.

The hand is the original and universal sceptre, which not only represents, but ascertains

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ascertains our dominion over all the elements and over every creature. Though we have not the strength of the horse, the swiftness of the greyhound, or the quick scent of the spaniel, yet directed by the understanding, and enabled by the hand, we can as it were make them all our own. These short hands have found a way to penetrate the bowels of the earth, to touch the bottom of the sea. These feeble hands can manage the wings of the wind, arm themselves with the violence of fire, and press into their service the forcible impetuosity of water. How greatly then are we indebted to our wise Creator, for this distinguishing, this invaluable member!

Above all is the head, for the residence of the brain, ample to receive, and firm to defend it. It has a communication with all, even the remotest parts; has outlets for dispatching couriers to all quarters, and avenues for receiving speedy intelligence, on all needful occasions. It has lodgements wherein to post centinels; for various offices: to expedite whose operations the whole turns on a curious pivot, nicely contrived to afford the largest and freest circulations.

This is screened from heat, defended from cold, and at the same time beautified by the hair: a decoration so delicate, as no art can supply, so perfectly light, as no way to encumber the wearer.

While other animals are prone in their aspect, the attitude of man is erect, which is by far the most graceful, and bespeaks superiority. It is by far the most commodious, for prosecution of all our extensive designs. It is likewise safest, less exposed to dangers, and better contrived to repel or avoid them. Does it not also remind us of our noble original, and our sublime end? Our original, which was the breath of the Almighty: our end, which was the enjoyment of him in glory?

Thus much for the rafters and beams of the house. Let us now survey the lodgings within. Here are ligaments, a tough and strong arrangement of fibres, to unite the several parts and render what would otherwise be an unwieldy jumble, a well-compacted and self-manageable system: membranes, thin and flexile tunics, to inwrap the fleshy parts, to connect some, and form a separation between others: arterics, the rivers of our little world, that striking out as they go, into numberless small canals, visit every street, yes, every apartment in the

vital city. These being wide at first, and growing narrower and narrower, check the rapidity of the blood. This thrown from the heart, dilates the arteries, and their own elastic force contracts them; by which means they vibrate against the finger, and much assist both in the discovery and cure of diseases. The larger arteries, wherever the blood is forced to bend, are situate on the bending side; lest being stretched to an improper length, the circulation should be retarded. They are not, like several of the veins, near the surface, but placed at a proper depth. And hereby they are more secure from external injuries. In those parts which are most liable to pressure, an admirable expedient takes place. The arteries inosculate with each other: breaking into a new track, they fetch a little circuit, and afterwards return into the main road. So that if any thing block up or straiten the direct passage, the current by diverting to this new channel, eludes the impediment, flows on, and soon regains its wonted course.

The veins receive the blood from the arteries, and re-convey it to the heart. The pressure of the blood is not near so forcible in these as in the arteries. Therefore their texture is considerably slighter. Such an exact œconomist is nature, amidst all her liberality! In many of these canals, the current, though widening continually, is obliged to push its way against the perpendicular: hereby it is exposed to the danger of falling back and overloading the vessels. To prevent this, valves are interposed at proper distances, which are no hindrance to the regular passage, but prevent the reflux, and facilitate the passage of the blood to the grand receptacle. But these valves are only where the blood is constrained to climb: where the ascent ceases, they cease also.

Here are glands to filtrate the passing fluids, each of which is an assemblage of vessels, complicated with seeming confusion, but with perfect regularity. Each forms a secretion far more curious than the most admired operations of chemistry. Muscles, composed of the finest fibres, yet endued with incredible strength, fashioned after a variety of patterns, but all in the highest taste for elegance and convenience. These are the instruments of motion, and at the command of the will, execute their functions quick as lightning: nerves, surprisingly minute, which set the muscles at

work, diffuse the power of sensation through the body; and upon any impression from without, give all needful intelligence to the soul: Vesicles, distended with an unctuous matter, in some places compose a soft cushion; as in the calf of the leg, whose large muscles, mixt with fat, are of singular service to those important bones. This flanks and fortifies them, like a strong bastion, supports and cherishes them, like a soft pillow. In other places they fill up the vacuities, and smooth the inequalities of the flesh. Inwardly they supply the machine for motion; outwardly they render it smooth and graceful.

The skin, like a curious surcoat, covers the whole, formed of the most delicate network, whose meshes are minute, and whose threads are multiplied, even to a prodigy: the meshes are so minute, that nothing passes them, which is discernible by the eye; though they discharge every moment myriads and myriads of superfluous incumbrances. The threads are so multiplied, that neither the point of the smallest needle, nor the infinitely finer lance of a gnat, can pierce any part without drawing blood, and causing an uneasy sensation. Consequently, without wounding by so small a puncture, both a nerve and a vein!

But a course of incessant action must exhaust the solids and waste the fluids, and unless both are properly recruited, in a short time destroy the machine. For this reason it is furnished with the organs, and endued with the powers of nutrition: teeth, the foremost, thin and sharp, to bite asunder the food; the hindmost, broad and strong, indented with small cavities, the better to grind in pieces what is transmitted to them. But in children the formation of teeth is postponed till they have occasion for them.

Were the teeth, like other bones, covered with the periosteum, chewing would give much pain. Were they quite naked, they would soon decay and perish. To guard against both, they are overlaid with a neat enamel, harder than the bone itself, which gives no pain in chewing, and yet secures them from various injuries.

The lips prevent the food from slipping out of the mouth, and, assisted by the tongue, return it to the grinders. While they do this in concert with the cheeks, they squeeze a thin liquor from the adjacent glands. This moistens the food and prepares it for digestion. When the mouth

is inactive these are nearly closed: but when we speak or eat, their moisture being then necessary, is excreted as need requires.

But the food could not descend merely by its own weight, through a narrow and clammy passage into the stomach. Therefore to effect this, muscles both strait and circular are provided. The former enlarge the cavity, and give an easy admittance. The latter, closing behind the descending aliment, press it downward. But before the food enters the gullet, it must of necessity pass over the orifice of the windpipe: whence it is in danger of falling upon the lungs, which might occasion instant death. To obviate this, a moveable lid is placed, which when the smallest particle advances, is pulled down and shut close, but as soon as it is swallowed, is let loose and stands open. Thus the important pass is always made sure against any noxious approaches; yet always left free for the air, and open for respiration.

The food descending into the stomach, is not yet ready for the bowels. Therefore that great receiver is strong to bear, and proper to detain it, till it is wrought into the smoothest pulp imaginable. From hence it is discharged by a gentle force, and passes gradually into the intestines.

Near the entrance waits the gall-bladder, ready to pour its salutary juice upon the aliment, which dissolves any thing viscid, scours the intestines, and keeps all the fine apertures clear. This bag, as the stomach fills, is prest thereby, and then only discharges its contents. It is also furnished with a valve of a very peculiar, namely, of a spiral form: through which the deterfive liquid cannot hastily pour, but must gently ooze. Admirable construction! which, without any care of ours, gives the needful supply, and no more.

The nutriment then pursues its way through the mazes of the intestines: which by a wormlike motion protrude it and force its small particles into the lacteal vessels. These are a series of the finest strainers, ranged in countless multitudes all along the sides of the winding passage. Had this been strait or short, the food could not have resigned a sufficient quantity of its nourishing particles. Therefore it is artfully convolved and greatly extended, that whatever passes may be sifted thoroughly. As the aliment proceeds, it is more and more drained of its nutritious juices. In consequence of this, it would become hard,

and

and pain the tender parts, but that glands are posted in proper places, to discharge a lubricated fluid. These are smaller or fewer near the stomach, because there the aliment is moist enough: whereas in the bowels remote from the stomach, they are either multiplied or enlarged.

The chyle drawn off by the lacteals is carried through millions of ducts, too fine even for the microscope to discover. To this it is owing that nothing enters the blood, but what is capable of passing through the finest vessels. It is then lodged in several commodious cells (the glands of the mesentery) and there mixt with a thin diluting lymph, which makes it more apt to flow. Hence it is conveyed to the common receptacle, and mounts through a perpendicular tube into the last subclavian vein. This tube lies contiguous to the great artery, whose strong pulsation drives on the fluid, and enables it to ascend and unload its treasure, at the very door of the heart.

But the chyle is as yet in too crude a state, to be fit for the animal functions. Therefore it is thrown into the lungs. In the spongy cells of this amazing laboratory, it mixes with the external air, and its whole substance is made more smooth and uniform. Thus improved it enters the left ventricle of the heart, a strong, active, indefatigable muscle. The large muscles of the arm or of the thigh are soon wearied: a day's labour, or a day's journey, exhausts their strength. But the heart toils whole weeks, whole months, nay years, unwearied: is equally a stranger to intermission and fatigue. Impelled by this, part of the blood shoots upward to the head; part rolls through the whole body.

But how shall a stream divided into myriads of channels, be brought back to its source? Should any portion of it be unable to return, putrefaction, if not death, must ensue. Therefore the all-wise Creator has connected the extremities of the arteries, with the beginning of the veins: so that the same force which darts the blood through the former, helps to drive it through the latter. Thus it is re-conducted to the great cistern, and there played off afresh.

Where two opposite currents would be in danger of clashing, where the streams from the vena cava and vena ascendens coincide, a fibrous excrescence interposes, which like a projecting pier, breaks the

stroke of each, and throws both into their proper receptacle. Where the motion is to be speedy, the channels either forbear to wind (as in the great artery, which descends to the feet) or lessen in their dimensions, as in every interval between all the ramifications. When the progress is to be retarded, the tubes are variously convolved or their diameter contracted. Thus guarded, the living flood never discontinues its course, but night and day, whether we sleep or wake, still perseveres to run briskly through the arteries, and return softly through the veins.

But farther. The great Creator has made us an invaluable present of the senses, to be the inlets of innumerable pleasures, and the means of the most valuable advantages.

The eye, in its elevated station, commands the most enlarged prospects. Consisting only of fluids inclosed within coats, it shews us all the graces and glories of nature. How wonderful, that an image of the hugest mountains, and the widest landscapes should enter the small pupil! that the rays of light should paint on the optic nerve, paint in an instant of time, paint in their truest colours and exact fit lineaments, every species of external objects!

The eye is so tender, that the slightest touch might injure its delicate frame. It is guarded therefore with a peculiar care, intrenched deep and barricaded round with bones. As the smallest fly might incommode its polished surface, it is farther protected by two substantial curtains. In sleep, when there is no occasion for the sense, but a necessity to guard the organ, these curtains close of their own accord. At any time they fly together as quick as thought. They are lined with an extremely fine sponge, moist with its own dew. Its bristly palisades keep out the least mote, and moderate the too strong impressions of the light.

As in our waking hours we have almost incessant need for these little orbs, they run upon the finest castors, rolling every way with the utmost ease: which circumstance, added to the flexibility of the neck, renders our two eyes as useful as a thousand.

The ear consists of an outward porch and inner rooms. The porch, somewhat prominent from the head, is of a cartilaginous substance, covered with tight membranes, and wrought into sinuous cavities.

These,

These, like circling hills, collect the wandering undulations of the air, and transmit them with a vigorous impulse, to the finely stretched membrane of the drum. This is expanded upon a circle of bones, over a polished reverberating cavity. It is furnished with braces that strain or relax, as the sound is faint or strong. The hammer and the anvil, the winding labyrinth, and the sounding galleries, these and other pieces of mechanism, all instrumental to hearing, are inexpressibly curious.

Amazingly exact must be the tension of the auditory nerves, since they answer the smallest tremors of the atmosphere, and distinguish their most subtle variations. These living chords, tuned by an almighty hand, and spread through the echoing isles, receive all the impressions of sound, and propagate them to the brain. These give existence to the charms of music, and the still nobler charms of discourse.

The eye is useless amidst the gloom of night. But the ear hears through the darkest medium. The eye is on duty only in our waking hours: but the ear is always accessible.

As there are concussions of the air, which are discernible only by the instruments of hearing, so there are odoriferous particles wafted in the air, which are perceivable only by the smell. The nostrils are wide at the bottom, that more effluvia may enter, narrow at the top, that, when entered, they may act more strongly. The steams that exhale from fragrant bodies, are fine beyond imagination. Microscopes that shew thousands of animals in a drop of water, cannot bring one of these to our sight. Yet so judiciously are the olfactory nets set, that they catch the vanishing fugitives. They imbibe all the roaming perfumes of spring, and make us banquet even on the invisible dainties of nature.

Another capacity for pleasure our bountiful Creator has bestowed, by granting us the powers of taste. This is circumstanced in a manner so benign and wise, as to be a standing plea for temperance, which sets the finest edge on the taste, and adds the most poignant relish to its enjoyments.

And these senses are not only so many sources of delight, but a joint security to our health. They are the inspectors that examine our food, and enquire into the properties of it. For the discharge of this office they are excellently qualified, and

most commodiously situated. So that nothing can gain admission, till it has pass their scrutiny.

To all these, as a most necessary supplement, is added the sense of Feeling. And how happily is it tempered between the two extremes, neither too acute, nor too obtuse! Indeed all the senses are exactly adapted to the exigencies of our present state. Were they strained much higher, they would be avenues of anguish, were they much relax, they would be well-nigh useless.

The crowning gift which augments the benefits accruing from all the senses, is speech. Speech makes me a gainer by the eyes and ears of others; by their ideas and observations. And what an admirable instrument for articulating the voice, and modifying it into speech, is the tongue? This little collection of muscular fibres, under the direction of the Creator, is the artificer of our words. By this we communicate the secrets of our breasts, and make our very thoughts audible. This likewise is the efficient cause of music; it is soft as the lute, or shrill as the trumpet. As the tongue requires an easy play, it is lodged in an ample cavity. It moves under a concave roof, which gives additional vigour to the voice, as the shell of a violin to the sound of the strings.

Wonderfully wise is the regulation of voluntary and involuntary motions. The will in some cases has no power; in others she is an absolute sovereign. If she commands, the arm is stretched, the hand closed. How easily, how punctually are her orders obeyed!—To turn the screw, or work the lever, is laborious and wearisome. But we work the vertebrae of the neck, with all their appendant chambers: we advance the leg with the whole incumbent body; we rise, we spring from the ground, and though so great a weight is raised, we meet with no difficulty or fatigue.

That all this should be effected without any toil, by a bare act of the will, is very surprising. But that it should be done, even while we are entirely ignorant of the manner in which it is performed, is most astonishing! Who can play a single tune upon the spinet, without learning the differences of the keys? Yet the mind touches every spring of the human machine, with the most masterly skill, though she knows nothing at all of the nature of her instrument, or the process of her operations.

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The eye of a rustic, who has no notion of optics, or any of its laws, shall lengthen and shorten its axis, dilate and contract its pupil, without the least hesitation, and with the utmost propriety: exactly adapting itself to the particular distance of objects, and the different degrees of light. By this means it performs some of the most curious experiments in the Newtonian philosophy, without the least knowledge of the science, or consciousness of its own dexterity!

Which shall we admire most, the multitude of organs; their finished form and faultless order; or the power which the soul exercises over them? Ten thousand reins are put into her hands: and she manages all, conducts all, without the least perplexity or irregularity. Rather with a promptitude, a consistency, and speed, that nothing can equal!

So fearfully and wonderfully are we made! Made of such complicated parts, each so nicely fashioned, and all so exactly arranged; every one executing such curious functions, and many of them operating in so mysterious a manner! And since health depends on such a numerous assemblage of moving organs; since a single secretion stopped may spoil the temperature of the fluid, a single wheel clogged may put an end to the solids: with what holy fear should we pass the time of our sojourning here below! Trusting for continual preservation, not merely to our own care, but to the Almighty Hand, which formed the admirable machine, directs its agency, and supports its being!

This is an ingenious description of the cabinet, it is fit we should attend to the jewel it contains. If the House is so curiously and wonderfully made by the all-wise Architect, what may we not expect the Inhabitants to be!

Know'st thou th' importance of a soul immortal?
Behold the midnight glory: worlds on worlds!
Amazing pomp! redouble this amaze;
Ten thousand age, and twice ten thousand more;
Then weigh the whole; one soul outweighs them all.
And calls th' astonishing magnificence
Of unintelligent creation poor. *YOUNG.*

The reasoning of Mr. Addison on this subject is very flattering to human nature, and deserves the serious consideration of every intelligent Being. The perpetual progress of the soul, says that

elegant writer, to its perfection, without a possibility of ever arriving at it, seems to me to carry a great weight with it for the immortality thereof. How can it enter into the thoughts of man, that the soul, which is capable of such immense perfections, and of receiving new improvements to all eternity, shall fall away into nothing almost as soon as it is created? Are such abilities made for no purpose? A brute arrives at a point of perfection that he can never pass: in a few years he has all the endowments he is capable of; and were he to live ten thousand more, would be the same thing he is at present. Were a human soul thus at a stand in her accomplishments, were her faculties to be full blown, and incapable of farther enlargements, I could imagine it might fall away insensibly, and drop at once into a state of annihilation. But can we believe a thinking being, that is in a perpetual progress of improvement, and travelling on from perfection to perfection, after having just looked abroad into the works of its Creator, and made a few discoveries of his infinite goodness, wisdom, and power, must perish at her first setting out, and in the very beginning of her enquiries?

A man, considered in his present state, seems only sent into the world to propagate his kind. He provides himself with a successor, and immediately quits his post to make room for him.

Hesiod. Works and Days. l. 20.
Hesiod. Works and Days. l. 20.
— Their crowds, their, as in a rolling flood
Wave urges wave. *Cassius.*

He does not seem born to enjoy life, but to deliver it down to others. This is not surprising to consider in animals, which are formed for our use, and can finish their business in a short life. The silk-worm, after having spun her task, lays her eggs and dies. But a man can never have taken in his full measure of knowledge, has not time to subdue his passions, establish his soul in virtue, and come up to the perfection of his nature, before he is hurried off the stage. Would an infinitely wise Being make such glorious creatures for so mean a purpose? Can he delight in the production of such abortive intelligences, such short-lived reasonable beings? Would he give us talents that are not to be exert-

ed? Capacities that are never to be gratified? How can we find that wisdom, which shines through all his works, in the formation of man, without looking on this world as only a nursery for the next, and believing that the several generations of rational creatures, which rise up and disappear in such quick successions, are only to receive their first rudiments of existence here, and afterwards to be transplanted into a more friendly climate, where they may spread and flourish to all eternity.

There is not, in my opinion, a more pleasing and triumphant consideration in religion than this of the perpetual progress which the soul makes towards the perfection of its nature, without ever arriving at a period in it. To look upon the soul as going on from strength to strength, to consider that she is to shine for ever with new accessions of glory, and brighten to all eternity: that she will still be adding virtue to virtue, and knowledge to knowledge; carries in it something wonderfully agreeable to that ambition that is natural to the mind of man. Nay, it must be a prospect pleasing to God himself, to see his creation for ever beautifying in his eyes, and drawing nearer to him, by greater degrees of resemblance.

Methinks, this single consideration, of the progress of a finite spirit to perfection, will be sufficient to extinguish all envy in inferior nature, and all contempt in superior. That cherubim, which now appears as a god to a human soul, knows very well, that a period will come about in eternity, when the human soul shall be as perfect as he himself now is: nay, when she shall look down upon that degree of perfection, as much as she now falls short of it. It is true, the higher nature still advances, and by that means preserves his distance and superiority in the scale of being; but he knows, how high soever the station is of which he stands possessed at present, the inferior nature will at length mount up to it, and shine forth in the same degree of glory.

With what astonishment and veneration may we look into our own souls, where there are such hidden stores of virtue and knowledge, such inexhausted sources of perfection? We know not yet what we shall be, nor will it ever enter into the heart of man to conceive the glory that will be always in reserve for him. The soul, considered with its Creator, is like one of those ma-

thematical lines that may draw nearer to another for all eternity without a possibility of touching it: and can there be a thought so transporting, as to consider ourselves in these perpetual approaches to him, who is not only the standard of perfection but of happiness!

§ 8. *Considerations on the Chain of Being supposed to be in Nature.*

The chain of being, which some worthy persons have supposed to exist in nature, is a very pleasing idea, and has been ably handled by the late Soame Jenyns, Esq. in his *Disquisition* upon that subject. The farther we enquire, says that able writer, into the works of our great Creator, the more evident marks we shall discover of his infinite wisdom and power, and perhaps in none more remarkable, than in that wonderful chain of beings, with which this terrestrial globe is furnished; rising above each other, from the senseless clod, to the brightest genius of human kind, in which though the chain itself is sufficiently visible, the links, which compose it, are so minute, and so finely wrought, that they are quite imperceptible to our eyes. The various qualities, with which these various beings are endued, we perceive without difficulty, but the boundaries of those qualities, which form this chain of subordination, are so mixed, that where one ends, and the next begins, we are unable to discover. The manner by which this is performed, is a subject well worthy of our consideration, and on an accurate examination appears to be this.

In order to diffuse all possible happiness, God has been pleased to fill this earth with innumerable orders of beings, superior to each other in proportion to the qualities and faculties which he has thought proper to bestow upon them: to mere matter he has given extension, solidity, and gravity; to plants, vegetation; to animals, life and instinct; and to man, reason; each of which superior qualities augments the excellence and dignity of the possessor, and places him higher in the scale of universal existence. In all these, it is remarkable, that he has not formed this necessary, and beautiful subordination, by placing beings of quite different natures above each other, but by granting some additional quality to each superior order, in conjunction with all those possessed by their inferiors; so that, tho' they rise above each other in excellence, by means of these additional quali-

ties,

ties, one mode of existence is common to them all, without which they never could have coalesced in one uniform and regular system.

Thus, for instance, in plants we find all the qualities of mere matter, the only order below them, solidity, extension, and gravity, with the addition of vegetation; in animals, all the properties of matter, together with the vegetation of plants, to which is added, life and instinct; and in man we find all the properties of matter, the vegetation of plants, the life and instinct of animals, to all which is superadded, reason.

That man is endued with these properties of all inferior orders, will plainly appear by a slight examination of his composition; his body is material, and has all the properties of mere matter, solidity, extension, and gravity; it is also vested with the quality of plants, that is, a power of vegetation, which it incessantly exercises without any knowledge or consent of his: it is sown, grows up, expands, comes to maturity, withers and dies, like all other vegetables: he possesses likewise the qualities of lower animals, and shares their fate; like them, he is called into life without his knowledge or consent; like them, he is compelled, by irresistible instincts, to answer the purposes for which he was designed; like them, he performs his destined course, partakes of its blessings, and endures its sufferings for a short time, then dies, and is seen no more: in him instinct is not less powerful, than in them, tho' less visible, by being confounded with reason, which it sometimes concurs with, and sometimes counteracts; by this, with the concurrence of reason, he is taught the belief of a God, of a future state, and the difference between moral good and evil; to pursue happiness, to avoid danger, and to take care of himself, and his offspring; by this too he is frequently impelled, in contradiction to reason, to relinquish ease, and safety, to traverse inhospitable deserts and tempestuous seas, to inflict, and suffer all the miseries of war, and, like the herring, and the mackarel, to hasten to his own destruction, for the public benefit, which he neither understands, or cares for. Thus is this wonderful chain extended from the lowest to the highest order of terrestrial beings, by links so nicely fitted, that the beginning and end of each is invisible to the most inquisitive eye, and yet they altogether compose one vast and beautiful system of subordination.

The manner by which the consummate wisdom of the divine artificer has formed this gradation, so extensive in the whole, and so imperceptible in the parts, is this; —He constantly unites the highest degree of the qualities of each inferior order to the lowest degree of the same qualities, belonging to the order next above it; by which means, like the colours of a skilful painter, they are so blended together, and shaded off into each other, that no line of distinction is any where to be seen. Thus, for instance, solidity, extension, and gravity, the qualities of mere matter, being united with the lowest degree of vegetation, compose a stone; from whence this vegetative power ascending thro' an infinite variety of herbs, flowers, plants, and trees, to its greatest perfection in the sensitive plant, joins there the lowest degree of animal life in the shell-fish, which adheres to the rock; and it is difficult to distinguish which possesses the greatest share, as the one shews it only by shrinking from the finger, and the other by opening to receive the water, which surrounds it. In the same manner this animal life rises from this low beginning in the shell-fish, thro' innumerable species of insects, fishes, birds, and beasts, to the confines of reason, where, in the dog, the monkey, and the chimpanzee, it unites so closely with the lowest degree of that quality in man, that they cannot easily be distinguished from each other. From this lowest degree in the brutal Hottentot, reason, with the assistance of learning and science, advances, thro' the various stages of human understanding, which rise above each other, till in a Bacon, or a Newton, it attains the summit.

Here we must stop, being unable to pursue the progress of this astonishing chain beyond the limits of this terrestrial globe with the naked eye; but thro' the perspective of analogy and conjecture, we may perceive, that it ascends a great deal higher, to the inhabitants of other planets, to angels, and archangels, the lowest orders of whom may be united by a like easy transition with the highest of our own, in whom, to reason may be added intuitive knowledge, insight into futurity, with innumerable other faculties, of which we are unable to form the least idea; through whom it may ascend, by gradations almost infinite, to those most exalted of created beings, who are seated on the footstool of the celestial throne.

§ 221. *Of the Scriptures, as the Rule of Life.*

As you advance in years and understanding, I hope you will be able to examine for yourself the evidences of the Christian religion; and that you will be convinced, on rational grounds, of its divine authority. At present, such enquiries would demand more study, and greater powers of reasoning, than your age admits of. It is your part, therefore, till you are capable of understanding the proofs, to believe your parents and teachers, that the Holy Scriptures are writings inspired by God, containing a true history of facts, in which we are deeply concerned—a true recital of the laws given by God to Moses; and of the precepts of our blessed Lord and Saviour, delivered from his own mouth to his disciples, and repeated and enlarged upon in the edifying epistles of his apostles—who were men chosen from amongst those who had the advantage of conversing with our Lord, to bear witness of his miracles and resurrection—and who, after his ascension, were assisted and inspired by the Holy Ghost. This sacred volume must be the rule of your life. In it you will find all truths necessary to be believed; and plain and easy directions for the practice of every duty. Your Bible, then, must be your chief study and delight: but, as it contains many various kinds of writing—some parts obscure and difficult of interpretation, others plain and intelligible to the meanest capacity—I would chiefly recommend to your frequent perusal such parts of the sacred writings as are most adapted to your understanding, and most necessary for your instruction. Our Saviour's precepts were spoken to the common people amongst the Jews; and were therefore given in a manner easy to be understood, and equally striking and instructive to the learned and unlearned: for the most ignorant may comprehend them, whilst the wisest must be charmed and awed by the beautiful and majestic simplicity with which they are expressed. Of the same kind are the Ten Commandments, delivered by God to Moses; which, as they were designed for universal laws, are worded in the most concise and simple manner, yet with a majesty which commands our utmost reverence.

I think you will receive great pleasure, as well as improvement, from the historical books of the Old Testament—provided you read them as an history, in a regular course,

and keep the thread of it in your mind as you go on. I know of none, true or fictitious, that is equally wonderful, interesting, and affecting; or that is told in so short and simple a manner as this, which is, of all histories, the most authentic.

I shall give you some brief directions, concerning the method and course I wish you to pursue, in reading the Holy Scriptures. May you be enabled to make the best use of this most precious gift of God—this sacred treasure of knowledge!—May you read the Bible, not as a task, nor as the dull employment of that day only, in which you are forbidden more lively entertainments—but with a sincere and ardent desire of instruction: with that love and delight in God's word, which the holy Psalmist so pathetically felt and described, and which is the natural consequence of loving God and virtue! Though I speak this of the Bible in general, I would not be understood to mean, that every part of the volume is equally interesting. I have already said that it consists of various matter, and various kinds of books, which must be read with different views and sentiments. The having some general notion of what you are to expect from each book, may possibly help you to understand them, and will heighten your relish of them. I shall treat you as if you were perfectly new to the whole; for so I wish you to consider yourself; because the time and manner in which children usually read the Bible, are very ill calculated to make them really acquainted with it; and too many people, who have read it thus, without understanding it, in their youth, satisfy themselves that they know enough of it, and never afterwards study it with attention, when they come to a maturer age.

If the feelings of your heart, whilst you read, correspond with those of mine, whilst I write, I shall not be without the advantage of your partial affection, to give weight to my advice; for, believe me, my heart and eyes overflow with tenderness, when I tell you how warm and earnest my prayers are for your happiness here and hereafter.

Mrs. Chapon.

§ 222. *Of Genesis.*

I now proceed to give you some short sketches of the matter contained in the different books of the Bible, and of the course in which they ought to be read.

The first book, Genesis, contains the most grand, and, to us, the most interesting events,

events, that ever happened in the universe:—The creation of the world, and of man:—The deplorable fall of man, from his first state of excellence and bliss, to the distressed condition in which we see all his descendants continue:—The sentence of death pronounced on Adam, and on all his race—with the reviving promise of that deliverance which has since been wrought for us by our blessed Saviour:—The account of the early state of the world:—Of the universal deluge:—The division of mankind into different nations and languages:—The story of Abraham, the founder of the Jewish people; whose unshaken faith and obedience, under the severest trial human nature could sustain, obtained such favour in the sight of God, that he vouchsafed to style him his friend, and promised to make of his posterity a great nation; and that in his seed—that is, in one of his descendants—all the kingdoms of the earth should be blessed. This, you will easily see, refers to the Messiah, who was to be the blessing and deliverance of all nations.—It is amazing that the Jews, possessing this prophecy, among many others, should have been so blinded by prejudice, as to have expected, from this great personage, only a temporal deliverance of their own nation from the subjection to which they were reduced under the Romans; It is equally amazing, that some Christians should, even now, confine the blessed effects of his appearance upon earth, to this or that particular sect or profession, when he is so clearly and emphatically described as the Saviour of the whole world.—The story of Abraham's proceeding to sacrifice his only son, at the command of God, is affecting in the highest degree; and sets forth a pattern of unlimited resignation, that every one ought to imitate, in those trials of obedience under temptation, or of acquiescence under afflicting dispensations, which fall to their lot. Of this we may be assured, that our trials will be always proportioned to the powers afforded us; if we have not Abraham's strength of mind, neither shall we be called upon to lift the bloody knife against the bosom of an only child; but if the almighty arm should be lifted up against him, we must be ready to resign him, and all we hold dear, to the divine will.—This action of Abraham has been censured by some, who do not attend to the distinction between obedience to a special command, and the detestably cruel sacrifices

of the Heathens, who sometimes voluntarily, and without any divine injunctions, offered up their own children, under the notion of appeasing the anger of their gods. An absolute command from God himself—as in the case of Abraham—entirely alters the moral nature of the action; since he, and he only, has a perfect right over the lives of his creatures, and may appoint whom he will, either angel or man, to be his instrument of destruction. That it was really the voice of God which pronounced the command, and not a delusion, might be made certain to Abraham's mind, by means we do not comprehend, but which we know to be within the power of him who made our souls as well as bodies, and who can controul and direct every faculty of the human mind: and we may be assured, that if he was pleased to reveal himself so miraculously, he would not leave a possibility of doubting whether it was a real or an imaginary revelation. Thus the sacrifice of Abraham appears to be clear of all superstition; and remains the noblest instance of religious faith and submission, that was ever given by a mere man: we cannot wonder that the blessings bestowed on him for it should have been extended to his posterity.—This book proceeds with the history of Isaac, which becomes very interesting to us, from the touching scene I have mentioned—and still more so, if we consider him as the type of our Saviour. It recounts his marriage with Rebecca—the birth and history of his two sons, Jacob, the father of the twelve tribes, and Esau, the father of the Edomites, or Idumeans—the exquisitely affecting story of Joseph and his brethren—and of his transplanting the Israelites into Egypt, who there multiplied to a great nation.

Mrs. Chapone.

§ 223. *Of Exodus.*

In Exodus, you read of a series of wonders, wrought by the Almighty, to rescue the oppressed Israelites from the cruel tyranny of the Egyptians, who, having first received them as guests, by degrees reduced them to a state of slavery. By the most peculiar mercies and exertions in their favour, God prepared his chosen people to receive, with reverent and obedient hearts, the solemn restitution of those primitive laws, which probably he had revealed to Adam and his immediate descendants, or which, at least, he had made known by the dictates of conscience; but which time, and

and the degeneracy of mankind, had much obscured. This important revelation was made to them in the Wilderness of Sinah; there, assembled before the burning mountain, surrounded "with blackness, and darkness, and tempest," they heard the awful voice of God pronounce the eternal law, impressing it on their hearts with circumstances of terror, but without those encouragements, and those excellent promises, which were afterwards offered to mankind by Jesus Christ. Thus were the great laws of morality restored to the Jews, and through them transmitted to other nations; and by that means a great restraint was opposed to the torrent of vice and impiety, which began to prevail over the world.

To those moral precepts, which are of perpetual and universal obligation, were superadded, by the ministration of Moses, many peculiar institutions, wisely adapted to different ends—either, to fix the memory of those past deliverances, which were figurative of a future and far greater salvation—to place inviolable barriers between the Jews and the idolatrous nations, by whom they were surrounded—or, to be the civil law by which the community was to be governed.

To conduct this series of events, and to establish these laws with his people, God raised up that great prophet Moses, whose faith and piety enabled him to undertake and execute the most arduous enterprizes; and to pursue, with unabated zeal, the welfare of his countrymen. Even in the hour of death, this generous ardour still prevailed: his last moments were employed in fervent prayers for their prosperity, and in rapturous gratitude for the glimpse vouchsafed him of a Saviour, far greater than himself, whom God would one day raise up to his people.

Thus did Moses, by the excellency of his faith, obtain a glorious pre-eminence among the saints and prophets in heaven; while, on earth, he will be ever revered as the first of those benefactors to mankind, whose labours for the public good have endeared their memory to all ages.

Mrs. Chapone.

§ 224. *Of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.*

The next book is Leviticus, which contains little besides the laws for the peculiar ritual observance of the Jews, and therefore affords no great instruction to us now:

you may pass it over entirely—and, for the same reason, you may omit the first eight chapters of Numbers. The rest of Numbers is chiefly a continuation of the history, with some ritual laws.

In Deuteronomy, Moses makes a recapitulation of the foregoing history, with zealous exhortations to the people, faithfully to worship and obey that God, who had worked such amazing wonders for them: he promises them the noblest temporal blessings, if they prove obedient; and adds the most awful and striking denunciations against them, if they rebel, or forsake the true God. I have before observed, that the sanctions of the Mosaic law were temporal rewards and punishments: those of the New Testament are eternal; these last, as they are so infinitely more forcible than the first, were reserved for the last, best gift to mankind—and were revealed by the Messiah, in the fullest and clearest manner. Moses, in this book, directs the method in which the Israelites were to deal with the seven nations, whom they were appointed to punish for their profligacy and idolatry, and whose land they were to possess, when they had driven out the old inhabitants. He gives them excellent laws, civil as well as religious, which were ever after the standing municipal laws of that people.—This book concludes with Moses's song and death. *Ibid.*

§ 225. *Of Joshua.*

The book of Joshua contains the conquests of the Israelites over the seven nations, and their establishment in the promised land.—Their treatment of these conquered nations must appear to you very cruel and unjust, if you consider it as their own act, unauthorized by a positive command: but they had the most absolute injunctions, not to spare these corrupt people—"to make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy to them, but utterly to destroy them:"—and the reason is given,—"lest they should turn away the Israelites from following the Lord, that they might serve other gods." The children of Israel are to be considered as instruments, in the hand of the Lord, to punish those whose idolatry and wickedness had deservedly brought destruction on them: this example, therefore, cannot be pleaded in behalf of cruelty, or bring any imputation on the character of the Jews. With regard to other cities, which did not belong to these

these seven nations, they were directed to deal with them according to the common law of arms at that time. If the city submitted, it became tributary, and the people were spared; if it resisted, the men were to be slain, but the women and children saved. Yet, though the crime of cruelty cannot be justly laid to their charge on this occasion, you will observe, in the course of their history, many things recorded of them, very different from what you would expect from the chosen people of God, if you supposed them selected on account of their own merit: their national character was by no means amiable; and we are repeatedly told, that they were not chosen for their superior righteousness—"for they were a stiff-necked people; and provoked the Lord with their rebellions from the day they left Egypt"—"You have been rebellious against the Lord," says Moses, "from the day that I knew you."—And he vehemently exhorts them, not to flatter themselves that their success was, in any degree, owing to their own merits. They were appointed to be the scourge of other nations, whose crimes rendered them fit objects of divine chastisement. For the sake of righteous Abraham, their founder, and perhaps for many other wise reasons, undiscovered to us, they were selected from a world over-run with idolatry, to preserve upon earth the pure worship of the one only God, and to be honoured with the birth of the Messiah amongst them. For this end they were precluded, by divine command, from mixing with any other people, and defended, by a great number of peculiar rites and observances, from falling into the corrupt worship practised by their neighbours. *Mrs. Chapon.*

§ 226. Of Judges, Samuel, and Kings.

The book of Judges, in which you will find the affecting stories of Sampson and Jephtha, carries on the history from the death of Joshua, about two hundred and fifty years; but the facts are not told in the times in which they happened, which makes some confusion; and it will be necessary to consult the marginal dates and notes, as well as the index, in order to get any clear idea, of the succession of events during that period.

The history then proceeds regularly through the two books of Samuel, and those of Kings: nothing can be more interesting and entertaining than the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon; but, after

the death of Solomon, when ten tribes revolted from his son Rehoboam, and became a separate kingdom, you will find some difficulty in understanding distinctly the histories of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, which are blended together; and by the likeness of the names; and other particulars, will be apt to confound your mind, without great attention to the different threads thus carried on together: the index here will be of great use to you. The second book of Kings concludes with the Babylonish captivity, 588 years before Christ—till which time the kingdom of Judah had descended uninterruptedly in the line of David. *Ibid.*

§ 227. Of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther.

The first book of Chronicles begins with a genealogy from Adam, through all the tribes of Israel and Judah; and the remainder is the same history which is contained in the books of Kings, with little or no variation, till the separation of the ten tribes. From that period, it proceeds with the history of the kingdom of Judah alone, and gives therefore a more regular and clear account of the affairs of Judah than the book of Kings. You may pass over the first book of Chronicles, and the nine first chapters of the second book; but, by all means, read the remaining chapters, as they will give you more clear and distinct ideas of the history of Judah, than that you read in the second book of Kings. The second of Chronicles ends, like the second of Kings, with the Babylonish captivity.

You must pursue the history in the book of Ezra, which gives an account of the return of some of the Jews on the edict of Cyrus, and of the rebuilding the Lord's temple.

Nehemiah carries on the history for about twelve years, when he himself was governor of Jerusalem, with authority to rebuild the walls, &c.

The story of Esther is prior in time to that of Ezra and Nehemiah; as you will see by the marginal dates; however, as it happened during the seventy years captivity, and is a kind of episode, it may be read in its own place.

This is the last of the canonical books that is properly historical; and I would therefore advise, that you pass over what follows, till you have continued the history through the apocryphal books. *Ibid.*

§ 228. *Of Job.*

The story of Job is probably very ancient, though that is a point upon which learned men have differed: It is dated, however, 1520 years before Christ: I believe it is uncertain by whom it was written: many parts of it are obscure; but it is well worth studying, for the extreme beauty of the poetry, and for the noble and sublime devotion it contains. The subject of the dispute between Job and his pretended friends seems to be, whether the Providence of God distributes the rewards and punishments of this life in exact proportion to the merit or demerit of each individual. His antagonists suppose that it does; and therefore infer, from Job's uncommon calamities, that, notwithstanding his apparent righteousness he was in reality a grievous sinner. They aggravate his supposed guilt by the imputation of hypocrisy, and call upon him to confess it, and to acknowledge the justice of his punishment. Job asserts his own innocence and virtue in the most pathetic manner, yet does not presume to accuse the Supreme Being of injustice. Elihu attempts to arbitrate the matter, by alledging the impossibility that so frail and ignorant a creature as man should comprehend the ways of the Almighty; and therefore condemns the unjust and cruel inference the three friends had drawn from the sufferings of Job. He also blames Job for the presumption of acquitting himself of all iniquity, since the best of men are not pure in the sight of God—but all have something to repent of: and he advises him to make this use of his afflictions. At last, by a bold figure of poetry, the Supreme Being himself is introduced, speaking from the whirlwind, and silencing them all by the most sublime display of his own power, magnificence, and wisdom, and of the comparative littleness and ignorance of man.—This indeed is the only conclusion of the argument, which could be drawn at a time when life and immortality were not yet brought to light. A future retribution is the only satisfactory solution of the difficulty arising from the sufferings of good people in this life.

Mrs. Chapon.

§ 229. *Of the Psalms.*

Next follow the Psalms, with which you cannot be too conversant. If you have any taste, either for poetry or devotion, they will be your delight, and will afford

you a continual feast. The bible translation is far better than that used in the common-prayer book, and will often give you the sense, when the other is obscure. In this, as well as in all other parts of the scripture, you must be careful always to consult the margin, which gives you the corrections made since the last translation, and it is generally preferable to the words of the text. I would wish you to select some of the Psalms that please you best, and get them by heart: or, at least, make yourself master of the sentiments contained in them. Dr. Delany's Life of David will shew you the occasions on which several of them were composed, which add much to their beauty and propriety; and by comparing them with the events of David's life, you will greatly enhance your pleasure in them. Never did the spirit of true piety breathe more strongly than in these divine songs: which being added to a rich vein of poetry, makes them more captivating to my heart and imagination, than any thing I ever read. You will consider how great disadvantages any poem must sustain from being rendered literally into prose, and then imagine how beautiful these must be in the original. May you be enabled, by reading them frequently, to transfuse into your own breast that holy flame which inspired the writer!—to delight in the Lord, and in his laws, like the Psalmist—to rejoice in him always, and to think “one day in his courts better than a thousand!”—But may you escape the heart-piercing sorrow of such repentance as that of David—by avoiding sin, which humbled this unhappy king to the dust—and which cost him such bitter anguish, as it is impossible to read of without being moved! Not all the pleasures of the most prosperous sinners would counterbalance the hundredth part of those sensations described in his penitential Psalms—and which must be the portion of every man, who has fallen from a religious state into such crimes, when once he recovers a sense of religion and virtue, and is brought to a real hatred of sin. However available such repentance may be to the safety and happiness of the soul after death, it is a state of such exquisite suffering here, that one cannot be enough surprised at the folly of those, who indulge sin, with the hope of living to make their peace with God by repentance. Happy are they who preserve their innocence unsullied by any great or wilful crimes,

crimes, and who have only the common failings of humanity to repent of; these are sufficiently mortifying to a heart deeply smitten with the love of virtue, and with the desire of perfection.—There are many very striking prophecies of the Messiah in these divine songs, particularly in Psalm xxii.—such may be found scattered up and down almost throughout the Old Testament. To bear testimony to him, is the great and ultimate end for which the spirit of prophecy was bestowed on the sacred writers;—but this will appear more plainly to you, when you enter on the study of prophecy, which you are now much too young to undertake. *Mrs. Chapon.*

§ 230. *Of the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Solomon's Song, the Prophecies, and Apocrypha.*

The Proverbs and Ecclesiastes are rich stores of wisdom, from which I wish you to adopt such maxims as may be of infinite use both to your temporal and eternal interest. But detached sentences are a kind of reading not proper to be continued long at a time; a few of them, well chosen and digested, will do you much more service, than to read half a dozen chapters together. In this respect, they are directly opposite to the historical books, which, if not read in continuation, can hardly be understood, or retained to any purpose.

The Song of Solomon is a fine poem—but its mystical reference to religion lies too deep for a common understanding: if you read it, therefore, it will be rather as matter of curiosity than of edification.

Next follow the Prophecies; which though highly deserving the greatest attention and study, I think you had better omit for some years, and then read them with a good exposition, as they are much too difficult for you to understand without assistance. Dr. Newton on the prophecies will help you much, whenever you undertake this study—which you should by all means do, when your understanding is ripe enough; because one of the main proofs of our religion rests on the testimony of the prophecies; and they are very frequently quoted, and referred to, in the New Testament; besides, the sublimity of the language and sentiments, through all the disadvantages of antiquity and translation, must, in very many passages, strike every person of taste; and the excellent moral

and religious precepts found in them must be useful to all.

Though I have spoken of these books in the order in which they stand, I repeat, that they are not to be read in that order—but that the thread of the history is to be pursued, from Nehemiah to the first book of the Maccabees, in the Apocrypha; taking care to observe the chronology regularly, by referring to the index, which supplies the deficiencies of this history from Josephus's Antiquities of the Jews. The first of Maccabees carries on the story till within 195 years of our Lord's circumcision: the second book is the same narrative, written by a different hand, and does not bring the history so forward as the first; so that it may be entirely omitted, unless you have the curiosity to read some particulars of the heroic constancy of the Jews, under the tortures inflicted by their heathen conquerors, with a few other things not mentioned in the first book.

You must then connect the history by the help of the index, which will give you brief heads of the changes that happened in the state of the Jews, from this time till the birth of the Messiah.

The other books of the Apocrypha, though not admitted as of sacred authority, have many things well worth your attention: particularly the admirable book called Ecclesiasticus, and the book of Wisdom. But, in the course of reading which I advise, these must be omitted till after you have gone through the Gospels and Acts, that you may not lose the historical thread. *Ibid.*

§ 231. *Of the New Testament, which is constantly to be referred to, as the Rule and Direction of our moral Conduct.*

We come now to that part of scripture, which is the most important of all, and which you must make your constant study, not only till you are thoroughly acquainted with it, but all your life long; because, how often soever repeated, it is impossible to read the life and death of our blessed Saviour, without renewing and increasing in our hearts that love and reverence, and gratitude towards him, which is so justly due for all he did and suffered for us! Every word that fell from his lips is more precious than all the treasures of the earth; for his “are the words of eternal life!” They must therefore be laid up in your heart,

heart, and constantly referred to, on all occasions, as the rule and direction of all your actions; particularly those very comprehensive moral precepts he has graciously left with us, which can never fail to direct us aright, if fairly and honestly applied: such as, "whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them."—There is no occasion, great or small, on which you may not safely apply this rule for the direction of your conduct: and, whilst your heart honestly adheres to it, you can never be guilty of any sort of injustice or unkindness. The two great commandments, which contain the summary of our duty to God and man, are no less easily retained, and made a standard by which to judge our own hearts.—"To love the Lord our God, with all our hearts, with all our minds, with all our strength; and our neighbour (or fellow-creature) as ourselves." "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour." Therefore if you have true benevolence, you will never do any thing injurious to individuals, or to society. Now, all crimes whatever are (in their remoter consequences at least, if not immediately and apparently) injurious to the society in which we live. It is impossible to love God without desiring to please him; and, as far as we are able, to resemble him; therefore the love of God must lead to every virtue in the highest degree; and, we may be sure, we do not truly love him, if we content ourselves with avoiding flagrant sins, and do not strive, in good earnest, to reach the greatest degree of perfection we are capable of. Thus do these few words direct us to the highest Christian virtue. Indeed, the whole tenor of the Gospel is to offer us every help, direction, and motive, that can enable us to attain that degree of perfection on which depends our eternal good. *Mrs. Chapon.*

§ 232. *Of the Example set by our Saviour, and his Character.*

What an example is set before us in our blessed Master! How is his whole life, from earliest youth, dedicated to the pursuit of true wisdom, and to the practice of the most exalted virtue! When you see him, at twelve years of age, in the temple amongst the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions on the subject of religion, and astonishing them all with his understanding and answers—you will say, perhaps,—"Well might the Son of

"God, even at those years, be far wiser than the aged; but, can a mortal child emulate such heavenly wisdom? Can such a pattern be proposed to my imitation?"—Yes, certainly;—remember that he has bequeathed to you his heavenly wisdom, as far as concerns your own good. He has left you such declarations of his will, and of the consequences of your actions, as you are, even now, fully able to understand, if you will but attend to them. If, then, you will imitate his zeal for knowledge, if you will delight in gaining information and improvement; you may even now become "wise unto salvation."—Unmoved by the praise he acquired amongst these learned men, you see him meekly return to the subjection of a child, under those who appeared to be his parents, though he was in reality their Lord: you see him return to live with them, to work for them, and to be the joy and solace of their lives; till the time came, when he was to enter on that scene of public action, for which his heavenly Father had sent him from his own right hand, to take upon him the form of a poor carpenter's son. What a lesson of humility is this; and of obedience to parents!—When, having received the glorious testimony from heaven, of his being the beloved Son of the Most High, he enters on his public ministry, what an example does he give us, of the most extensive and constant benevolence!—how are all his hours spent in doing good to the souls and bodies of men!—not the meanest sinner is below his notice:—to reclaim and save them, he condescends to converse familiarly with the most corrupt, as well as the most abject. All his miracles are wrought to benefit mankind; not one to punish and afflict them. Instead of using the almighty power, which accompanied him, to the purpose of exalting himself, and treading down his enemies, he makes no other use of it than to heal and to save.

When you come to read of his sufferings and death, the ignominy and reproach, the sorrow of mind, and torment of body, which he submitted to—when you consider that it was all for our sakes—that by his stripes we are healed—and by his death we are raised from destruction to everlasting life—what can I say, that can add any thing to the sensations you must then feel?—No power of language can make the scene more touching than it appears in the plain and simple narrations of the evangelists.

gelists. The heart that is unmoved by it, can be scarcely human;—but the emotions of tenderness and compunction, which almost every one feels in reading this account, will be of no avail, unless applied to the true end—unless it inspires you with a sincere and warm affection towards your blessed Lord—with a firm resolution to obey his commands;—to be his faithful disciple—and ever to renounce and abhor those sins, which brought mankind under divine condemnation, and from which we have been redeemed at so dear a rate. Remember that the title of Christian, or follower of Christ, implies a more than ordinary degree of holiness and goodness. As our motives to virtue are stronger than those which are afforded to the rest of mankind, our guilt will be proportionably greater, if we depart from it.

Our Saviour appears to have had three great purposes, in descending from his glory and dwelling amongst men. The first, to teach them true virtue, both by his example and precepts. The second, to give them the most forcible motives to the practice of it, by “bringing life and immortality to light;” by shewing them the certainty of a resurrection and judgment, and the absolute necessity of obedience to God’s laws. The third, to sacrifice himself for us, to obtain, by his death, the remission of our sins, upon our repentance and reformation, and the power of bestowing on his sincere followers the inestimable gift of immortal happiness.

Mrs. Chapone.

§ 233. *A comparative View of the Blessed and Cursed at the Last Day, and the Inference to be drawn from it.*

What a tremendous scene of the last day does the gospel place before our eyes!—of that day, when you and every one of us shall awake from the grave, and behold the Son of God, on his glorious tribunal, attended by millions of celestial beings, of whose superior excellence we can now form no adequate idea—when, in presence of all mankind, of those holy angels, and of the great Judge himself, you must give an account of your past life, and hear your final doom, from which there can be no appeal, and which must determine your fate to all eternity; then think—if for a moment you can bear the thought—what will be the desolation, shame, and anguish, of those wretched souls, who shall hear

these dreadful words;—“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”—Oh!—I cannot support even the idea of your becoming one of those undone, lost creatures!—I trust in God’s mercy, that you will make a better use of that knowledge of his will, which he has vouchsafed you, and of those amiable dispositions he has given you. Let us therefore turn from this horrid, this insupportable view—and rather endeavour to imagine, as far as is possible, what will be the sensations of your soul, if you should hear our heavenly Judge address you in these transporting words—“Come, thou blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world.”—Think, what it must be, to become an object of the esteem and applause—not only of all mankind assembled together—but of all the host of heaven, of our blessed Lord himself—nay, of his and our Almighty Father:—to find your frail flesh changed, in a moment, into a glorious celestial body, endowed with perfect beauty, health, and agility:—to find your soul cleansed from all its faults and infirmities; exalted to the purest and noblest affections; overflowing with divine love and rapturous gratitude!—to have your understanding enlightened and refined; your heart enlarged and purified; and every power and disposition of mind and body adapted to the highest relish of virtue and happiness!—Thus accomplished, to be admitted into the society of amiable and happy beings, all united in the most perfect peace and friendship, all breathing nothing but love to God, and to each other;—with them to dwell in scenes more delightful than the richest imagination can paint—free from every pain and care, and from all possibility of change or satiety;—but, above all, to enjoy the more immediate presence of God himself—to be able to comprehend and admire his adorable perfections in a high degree, though still far short of their infinity—to be conscious of his love and favour, and to rejoice in the light of his countenance!—But here all imagination fails:—we can form no idea of that bliss, which may be communicated to us by such a near approach to the Source of all beauty and all good:—we must content ourselves with believing, “that it is what mortal eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.” The crown of all our joys will be, to know that

that we are secure of possessing them for ever—what a transporting idea!

Can you reflect on all these things, and not feel the most earnest longings after immortality?—Do not all other views and desires seem mean and trifling, when compared with this?—And does not your inmost heart resolve, that this shall be the chief and constant object of its wishes and pursuit, through the whole course of your life?—If you are not insensible to that desire of happiness which seems woven into our nature, you cannot surely be unmoved by the prospect of such a transcendent degree of it; and that continued to all eternity—perhaps continually increasing. You cannot but dread the forfeiture of such an inheritance, as the most insupportable evil!—Remember then—remember the conditions on which alone it can be obtained. God will not give to vice, to carelessness, or sloth, the prize he has proposed to virtue. You have every help that can animate your endeavours:—You have written laws to direct you—the example of Christ and his disciples to encourage you—the most awakening motives to engage you—and you have besides, the comfortable promise of constant assistance from the Holy Spirit, if you diligently and sincerely pray for it.—O! let not all this mercy be lost upon you—but give your attention to this your only important concern, and accept, with profound gratitude, the inestimable advantages that are thus affectionately offered you.

Though the four Gospels are each of them a narration of the life, sayings, and death of Christ; yet as they are not exactly alike, but some circumstances and sayings, omitted in one, are recorded in another, you must make yourself perfectly master of them all.

The Acts of the holy Apostles, endowed with the Holy Ghost, and authorized by their divine Master, come next in order to be read.—Nothing can be more interesting and edifying, than the history of their actions—of the piety, zeal, and courage, with which they preached the glad tidings of salvation; and of the various exertions of the wonderful powers conferred on them by the Holy Spirit, for the confirmation of their mission.

Mrs. Chapon.

§ 234. *Character of St. Paul.*

The Character of St. Paul, and his miraculous conversion, demand your particular

attention: most of the apostles were men of low birth and education; but St. Paul was a Roman citizen; that is, he possessed the privileges annexed to the freedom of the city of Rome, which was considered as a high distinction; in those countries that had been conquered by the Romans. He was educated amongst the most learned sect of the Jews, and by one of their principal doctors. He was a man of extraordinary eloquence, as appears not only in his writings, but in several speeches in his own defence, pronounced before governors and courts of justice, when he was called to account for the doctrines he taught.—He seems to have been of an uncommonly warm temper, and zealous in whatever religion he professed: this zeal, before his conversion, shewed itself in the most unjustifiable actions, by furiously persecuting the innocent Christians; but, tho' his actions were bad, we may be sure his intentions were good; otherwise we should not have seen a miracle employed to convince him of his mistake, and to bring him into the right way. This example may assure us of the mercy of God towards mistaken consciences, and ought to inspire us with the most enlarged charity and good-will towards those whose erroneous principles mislead their conduct: instead of resentment and hatred against their persons, we ought only to feel an active wish of assisting them to find the truth; since we know not whether, if convinced, they might not prove, like St. Paul, chosen vessels to promote the honour of God, and of true religion. It is not now my intention to enter with you into any of the arguments for the truth of Christianity; otherwise it would be impossible wholly to pass over that, which arises from this remarkable conversion, and which has been so admirably illustrated by a noble writer, whose tract on this subject is in every body's hands.

Mrs. Chapon.

§ 235. *Of the Epistles.*

Next follow the Epistles, which make a very important part of the New Testament; and you cannot be too much employed in reading them. They contain the most excellent precepts and admonitions; and are of particular use in explaining more at large several doctrines of Christianity, which we could not so fully comprehend without them. There are, indeed, in the Epistles of St. Paul, many

passages

passages hard to be understood: such, in particular, are the first eleven chapters to the Romans; the greater part of his Epistles to the Corinthians and Galatians: and several chapters of that to the Hebrews. Instead of perplexing yourself with these more obscure passages of scripture, I would wish you to employ your attention chiefly on those that are plain; and to judge of the doctrines taught in the other parts, by comparing them with what you find in these. It is through the neglect of this rule, that many have been led to draw the most absurd doctrines from the holy scriptures.—Let me particularly recommend to your careful perusal the xii. xiii. xiv. and xv. chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. In the xiv. chapter St. Paul has in view the difference between the Jewish and Gentile (or Heathen) converts, at that time: the former were disposed to look with horror on the latter, for their impiety in not paying the same regard to the distinctions of days and meats that they did; and the latter, on the contrary, were inclined to look with contempt on the former, for their weakness and superstition. Excellent is the advice which the Apostle gives to both parties; he exhorts the Jewish converts not to judge, and the Gentiles not to despise; remembering, that the kingdom of Heaven is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.—Endeavour to conform yourself to this advice; to acquire a temper of universal candour and benevolence; and learn neither to despise nor condemn any persons on account of their particular modes of faith and worship; remembering always, that goodness is confined to no party—that there are wise and worthy men among all the sects of Christians—and that, to his own master, every one must stand or fall.

I will enter no farther into the several points discussed by St. Paul in his various epistles—most of them too intricate for your understanding at present, and many of them beyond my abilities to state clearly. I will only again recommend to you, to read those passages frequently, which, with so much fervour and energy, excite you to the practice of the most exalted piety and benevolence. If the effusions of a heart, warmed with the tenderest affection for the whole human race—if precept, warning, encouragement, example,

urged by an eloquence which such affection only could inspire, are capable of influencing your mind—you cannot fail to find, in such parts of his epistles as are adapted to your understanding, the strongest persuasives to every virtue that can adorn and improve your nature. *Mrs. Chapon.*

§ 236. *The Epistle of St. James.*

The epistle of St. James is entirely practical, and exceedingly fine; you cannot study it too much. It seems particularly designed to guard Christians against misunderstanding some things in St. Paul's writings, which have been fatally perverted to the encouragement of a dependance on faith alone, without good works. But the more rational commentators will tell you, that, by the works of the law, which the apostle asserts to be incapable of justifying us, he means, not the works of moral righteousness, but the ceremonial works of the Mosaic law; on which the Jews laid the greatest stress, as necessary to salvation. But St. James tells us, that, "if any man among us seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, that man's religion is vain;"—and that "pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widow in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Faith in Christ, if it produce not these effects, he declareth is dead, or of no power. *Ibid.*

§ 237. *Epistles of St. Peter, and the first of St. John.*

The Epistles of St. Peter are also full of the best instructions and admonitions, concerning the relative duties of life; amongst which, are set forth the duties of women in general, and of wives in particular. Some part of his second Epistle is prophetic; warning the church of false teachers, and false doctrines, which should undermine morality; and disgrace the cause of Christianity.

The first of St. John is written in a highly figurative style, which makes it, in some parts, hard to be understood; but the spirit of divine love, which it so fervently expresses, renders it highly edifying and delightful.—That love of God and of man, which this beloved apostle so

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pathetically

pathetically recommends, is in truth the essence of religion, as our Saviour himself informs us.

Mrs. Chapone.

§ 238. *Of the Revelations.*

The book of the Revelations contains a prophetic account of most of the great events relating to the Christian church, which were to happen from the time of the writer, St. John, to the end of the world. Many learned men have taken a great deal of pains to explain it; and they have done this, in many instances, very successfully: but I think it is yet too soon for you to study this part of scripture; some years hence, perhaps, there may be no objection to your attempting it, and taking into your hands the best expositions, to assist you in reading such of the most difficult parts of the New Testament as you cannot now be supposed to understand.—May Heaven direct you in studying this sacred volume, and render it the means of making you wise unto salvation!—May you love and reverence, as it deserves, this blessed and invaluable book, which contains the best rule of life, the clearest declaration of the will and laws of the Deity, the reviving assurance of favour to true penitents, and the unspeakably joyful tidings of eternal life and happiness to all the truly virtuous, through Jesus Christ, the Saviour and deliverer of the world!

Ibid.

§ 239. ECONOMY OF HUMAN LIFE.

IN TWO PARTS.

Part I. *Duties that relate to Man, considered as an individual—the Passions—Woman—Consanguinity, or natural relations—Providence, or the accidental differences in men—the Social Duties—Religion.*

INTRODUCTION.

Bow down your heads unto the dust, O ye inhabitants of earth! be silent and receive with reverence, instruction from on high.

Wheresoever the sun doth shine, wheresoever the wind doth blow, wheresoever there is an ear to hear, and a mind to conceive; there let the precepts of life be made known, let the maxims of truth be honoured and obeyed.

All things proceed from God. His

power is unbounded, his wisdom is from eternity, and his goodness endureth for ever.

He sitteth on his throne in the centre, and the breath of his mouth giveth life to the world.

He toucheth the stars with his finger, and they run their course rejoicing.

On the wings of the wind he walketh abroad, and performeth his will through all the regions of unlimited space.

Order, and grace, and beauty, spring from his hand.

The voice of wisdom speaketh in all his works; but the human understanding comprehendeth it not.

The shadow of knowledge passeth over the mind of man as a dream; he seeth as in the dark; he reasoneth, and is deceived.

But the wisdom of God is as the light of heaven; he reasoneth not; his mind is the fountain of truth.

Justice and mercy wait before his throne; benevolence and love enlighten his countenance for ever.

Who is like unto the Lord in glory? Who in power shall contend with the Almighty? Hath he any equal in wisdom? Can any in goodness be compared unto him?

He it is, O man! who hath created thee: thy station on earth is fixed by his appointment: the powers of thy mind are the gift of his goodness: the wonders of thy frame are the work of his hand.

Hear then his voice, for it is gracious; and he that obeyeth, shall establish his soul in peace.

DUTIES that relate to MAN, considered as an INDIVIDUAL.

§ 240. CONSIDERATION.

Commune with thyself, O man! and consider wherefore thou wert made.

Contemplate thy powers, contemplate thy wants and thy connections; so shalt thou discover the duties of life, and be directed in all thy ways.

Proceed not to speak or act, before thou hast weighed thy words, and examined the tendency of every step thou shalt take; so shall disgrace fly far from thee, and in thy house shall shame be a stranger; repentance shall not visit thee, nor sorrow dwell upon thy cheek.

The thoughtless man bridleth not his tongue;

tongue; he speaketh at random, and is entangled in the foolishness of his own words.

As one that runneth in haste, and leapeth over a fence, may fall into a pit on the other side, which he doth not see; so is the man that plungeth suddenly into any action, before he hath considered the consequences thereof.

Hearken therefore unto the voice of consideration; her words are the words of wisdom, and her paths shall lead thee to safety and truth.

§ 241. MODESTY.

Who art thou, O man! that presumest on thine own wisdom? or why dost thou vaunt thyself on thine own acquirements?

The first step towards being wise, is to know that thou art ignorant; and if thou wouldst not be esteemed foolish in the judgment of others, cast off the folly of being wise in thine own conceit.

As a plain garment best adorneth a beautiful woman, so a decent behaviour is the greatest ornament of wisdom.

The speech of a modest man giveth lustre to truth, and the diffidence of his words absolveth his error.

He relleth not on his own wisdom: he weigheth the counsels of a friend, and receiveth the benefit thereof.

He turneth away his ear from his own praise, and believeth it not; he is the last in discovering his own perfections.

Yet as a veil addeth to beauty, so are his virtues set off by the shade which his modesty casteth upon them.

But behold the vain man, and observe the arrogant; he clotheth himself in rich attire; he walketh in the public street; he casteth round his eyes, and courteth observation.

He tosseth up his head, and overlooketh the poor; he treateth his inferiors with insolence, and his superiors in return look down on his pride and folly with laughter.

He despiseth the judgement of others; he relieth on his own opinion, and is confounded.

He is puffed up with the vanity of his imagination; his delight is to hear and to speak of himself all the day long.

He swalloweth with greediness his own praise, and the flatterer in return eateth him up.

§ 242. APPLICATION.

Since the days that are past are gone for ever, and those that are to come may not

come to thee; it becometh thee, O man! to employ the present time, without regretting the loss of that which is past, or too much depending on that which is to come.

This instant is thine: the next is in the womb of futurity, and thou knowest not what it may bring forth.

Whatsoever thou resolvest to do, do it quickly. Defer not till the evening what the morning may accomplish.

Idleness is the parent of want and of pain; but the labour of virtue bringeth forth pleasure.

The hand of diligence defeateth want; prosperity and success are the industrious man's attendants.

Who is he that hath acquired wealth, that hath risen to power, that hath clothed himself with honour, that is spoken of in the city with praise, and that standeth before the king in his council? Even he that hath shut out Idleness from his house; and hath said unto Sloth, Thou art mine enemy.

He riseth up early, and lieth down late: he exerciseth his mind with contemplation, and his body with action, and preserveth the health of both.

The slothful man is a burden to himself; his hours hang heavy on his head; he loitereth about, and knoweth not what he would do.

His days pass away like the shadow of a cloud, and he leaveth behind him no mark for remembrance.

His body is diseased for want of exercise; he wisheth for action, but hath not power to move; his mind is in darkness; his thoughts are confused; he longeth for knowledge, but hath no application.

He would eat of the almond, but hateth the trouble of breaking its shell.

His house is in disorder, his servants are wasteful and riotous, and he runneth on towards ruin; he seeth it with his eyes, he heareth it with his ears, he shaketh his head, and wisheth, but hath no resolution; till ruin cometh upon him like a whirlwind, and shame and repentance descend with him to the grave.

§ 243. EMULATION.

If thy soul thirsteth for honour, if thy ear hath any pleasure in the voice of praise, raise thyself from the dust whereof thou art made, and exalt thy aim to something that is praise-worthy.

The oak that now spreadeth its branches towards the heavens, was once but an acorn in the bowels of the earth.

Endeavour to be first in thy calling, whatever it be; neither let any one go before thee in well doing; nevertheless, do not envy the merits of another; but improve thine own talents.

Scorn also to depress thy competitor by any dishonest or unworthy method: strive to raise thyself above him only by excelling him; so shall thy contest for superiority be crowned with honour, if not with success.

By a virtuous emulation, the spirit of a man is exalted within him; he panteth after fame, and rejoiceth as a racer to run his course.

He riseth like the palm-tree in spite of oppression; and as an eagle in the firmament of heaven, he soareth aloft, and fixeth his eye upon the glories of the sun.

The examples of eminent men are in his visions by night, and his delight is to follow them all the day long.

He formeth great designs, he rejoiceth in the execution thereof, and his name goeth forth to the ends of the world.

But the heart of the envious man is gall and bitterness; his tongue spitteth venom; the success of his neighbour breaketh his rest.

He sitteth in his cell repining, and the good that happeneth to another, is to him an evil.

Hatred and malice feed upon his heart, and there is no rest in him.

He seeleth in his own breast no love to goodness, and therefore believeth his neighbour is like unto himself.

He endeavours to depreciate those that excel him, and putteth an evil interpretation on all their doings.

He lieth on the watch, and meditates mischief; but the detestation of man pursueth him, he is crushed as a spider in his own web.

§ 244. PRUDENCE.

Hear the words of Prudence, give heed unto her counsels, and store them in thine heart; her maxims are universal, and all the virtues lean upon her: she is the guide and mistress of human life.

Put a bridle on thy tongue; set a guard before thy lips, lest the words of thine own mouth destroy thy peace.

Let him that scoffeth at the lame, take care that he halt not himself: whosoever speaketh of another's failings with pleasure, shall hear of his own with bitterness of heart.

Of much speaking cometh repentance, but in silence is safety.

A talkative man is a nuisance to society; the ear is sick of his babbling, the torrent of his words overwhelmeth conversation.

Boast not of thyself, for it shall bring contempt upon thee; neither deride another, for it is dangerous.

A bitter jest is the poison of friendship; and he that cannot restrain his tongue, shall have trouble.

Furnish thyself with the proper accommodations belonging to thy condition; yet spend not to the utmost of what thou canst afford, that the providence of thy youth may be a comfort to thy old age.

Let thine own business engage thy attention; leave the care of the state to the governors thereof.

Let not thy recreations be expensive, lest the pain of purchasing them exceed the pleasure thou hast in their enjoyment.

Neither let prosperity put out the eyes of circumspection, nor abundance cut off the hands of frugality; he that too much indulgeth in the superfluities of life, shall live to lament the want of its necessities.

From the experience of others, do thou learn wisdom; and from their failings correct thine own faults.

Trust no man before thou hast tried him; yet mistrust not without reason, it is uncharitable.

But when thou hast proved a man to be honest, lock him up in thine heart as a treasure! regard him as a jewel of inestimable price.

Refuse the favours of a mercenary man; they will be a snare unto thee; thou shalt never be quit of the obligation.

Use not to-day what to-morrow may want; neither leave that to hazard which foresight may provide for, or care prevent.

Yet expect not even from Prudence infallible success; for the day knoweth not what the night may bring forth.

The fool is not always unfortunate, nor the wise man always successful: yet never had a fool a thorough enjoyment; never was a wise man wholly unhappy.

§ 245. FORTITUDE.

Perils, and misfortunes, and want, and pain, and injury, are more or less the certain lot of every man that cometh into the world.

It behoveth thee, therefore, O child of calamity! early to fortify thy mind with courage

courage and patience, that thou mayest support, with a becoming resolution, thy allotted portion of human evil.

As the camel beareth labour, and heat, and hunger, and thirst, through deserts of sand, and fainteth not; so the fortitude of man shall sustain him through all perils.

A noble spirit disdaineth the malice of fortune; his greatness of soul is not to be cast down.

He hath not suffered his happiness to depend on her smiles, and therefore with her frowns he shall not be dismayed.

As a rock on the sea-shore he standeth firm, and the dashing of the waves disturbeth him not.

He raiseth his head like a tower on a hill, and the arrows of fortune drop at his feet.

In the instant of danger the courage of his heart sustaineth him; and the steadiness of his mind beareth him out.

He meeteth the evils of life as a man that goeth forth into battle, and returneth with victory in his hand.

Under the pressure of misfortunes, his calmness alleviates their weight, and his constancy shall surmount them.

But the dastardly spirit of a timorous man betrayeth him to shame.

By shrinking under poverty, he stoopeth down to meanness; and by tamely bearing insults, he inviteth injuries.

As a reed is shaken with a breath of air, so the shadow of evil maketh him tremble.

In the hour of danger he is embarrassed and confounded; in the day of misfortune he sinketh, and despair overwhelmeth his soul.

§ 246. CONTENTMENT.

Forget not, O man! that thy station on earth is appointed by the wisdom of the Eternal, who knoweth thy heart, who seeth the vanity of all thy wishes, and who often, in mercy, denieth thy requests.

Yet for all reasonable desires, for all honest endeavours, his benevolence hath established, in the nature of things, a probability of success.

The uneasiness thou feelest, the misfortunes thou bewailest, behold the root from whence they spring! even thine own folly, thine own pride, thine own distempered fancy.

Murmur not therefore at the dispensations of God, but correct thine own heart: neither say within thyself, If I had wealth or power, or leisure, I should be happy; for

know, they all bring to their several possessors their peculiar inconveniences.

The poor man seeth not the vexations and anxieties of the rich, he feeleth not the difficulties and perplexities of power, neither knoweth he the wearisomeness of leisure; and therefore it is that he repineth at his own lot.

But envy not the appearance of happiness in any man, for thou knowest not his secret griefs.

To be satisfied with a little is the greatest wisdom; and he that increaseth his riches, increaseth his cares; but a contented mind is a hidden treasure, and trouble findeth it not.

Yet if thou sufferest not the allurements of fortune to rob thee of justice or temperance, or charity, or modesty, even riches themselves shall not make thee unhappy.

But hence shalt thou learn, that the cup of felicity, pure and unmixed, is by no means a draught for mortal man.

Virtue is the race which God hath set him to run, and happiness the goal, which none can arrive at till he hath finished his course, and received his crown in the mansions of eternity.

§ 247. TEMPERANCE.

The nearest approach thou canst make to happiness on this side the grave, is to enjoy from heaven understanding and health.

These blessings if thou possessest, and wouldst preserve to old age, avoid the allurements of voluptuousness, and fly from her temptations.

When she spreadeth her delicacies on the board, when her wine sparkleth in the cup, when she smileth upon thee, and persuadeth thee to be joyful and happy; then is the hour of danger, then let Reason stand firmly on her guard.

For if thou hearkenest unto the words of her adversary, thou art deceived and betrayed.

The joy which she promiseth, changeth to madness, and her enjoyments lead on to diseases and death.

Look round her board; cast thine eyes upon her guests, and observe those who have been allured by her smiles, who have listened to her temptations.

Are they not meagre? are they not sickly? are they not spiritless?

Their short hours of jollity and riot are followed by tedious days of pain and dejection. She hath debauched and palled their

their appetites, that they have no relish for their nicest dainties: her votaries are become her victims; the just and natural consequence which God hath ordained, in the constitution of things, for the punishment of those who abuse his gifts.

But who is she that with graceful steps, and with a lively air, trips over yonder plain?

The rose blusheth on her cheeks, the sweetness of the morning breatheth from her lips; joy, tempered with innocence and modesty, sparkleth in her eyes, and from the cheerfulness of her heart she singeth as she walks.

Her name is Health; she is the daughter of Exercise and Temperance; their sons inhabit the mountains of the northern regions.

They are brave, active, and lively, and partake of all the beauties and virtues of their sister.

Vigour stringeth their nerves, strength dwelleth in their bones, and labour is their delight all the day long.

The employments of their father excite their appetites, and the repasts of their mother refresh them.

To combat the passions is their delight; to conquer evil habits their glory.

Their pleasures are moderate, and therefore they endure; their repose is short, but sound and undisturbed.

Their blood is pure, their minds are serene, and the physician findeth not the way to their habitations.

But safety dwelleth not with the sons of men, neither is security found within their gates.

Behold them exposed to new dangers from without, while a traitor within lurketh to betray them.

Their health, their strength, their beauty and activity, have raised desire in the bosom of lascivious love.

She standeth in her bower, she courteth their regard, she spreadeth her temptations.

Her limbs are soft and delicate; her attire is loose and inviting. Wantonness speaketh in her eyes, and on her bosom sits temptation. She beckoneth them with her finger, she wooeth them with her looks, and by the smoothness of her tongue, she endeavoureth to deceive.

Ah! fly from her allurements, stop thy ears to her enchanting words. If thou meetest the languishing of her eyes; if thou hearest the softness of her voice; if she caresseth her arms about thee, she bindeth thee in chains for ever.

Shame followeth, and disease, and want, and care, and repentance.

Enfeebled by dalliance, with luxury pampered, and softened by sloth, strength shall forsake thy limbs, and health thy constitution: thy days shall be few, and those inglorious; thy griefs shall be many, yet meet with no compassion.

The PASSIONS.

§ 248. HOPE and FEAR.

The promises of hope are sweeter than roses in the bud, and far more flattering to expectation; but the threatenings of fear are a terror to the heart.

Nevertheless, let not hope allure, nor fear deter thee from doing that which is right; so shalt thou be prepared to meet all events with an equal mind.

The terrors even of death are no terrors to the good; he that committeth no evil hath nothing to fear.

In all thy undertakings, let a reasonable assurance animate thy endeavours; if thou despairst of success, thou shalt not succeed.

Terrify not thy soul with vain fears, neither let thy heart sink within thee from the phantoms of imagination.

From fear proceedeth misfortune; but he that hopeth, helpeth himself.

As the ostrich when pursued, hideth his head, but forgetteth his body; so the fears of a coward expose him to danger.

If thou believest a thing impossible, thy despondency shall make it so; but he that persevereth, shall overcome all difficulties.

A vain hope flattereth the heart of a fool; but he that is wise pursueth it not.

In all thy desires let reason go along with thee, and fix not thy hopes beyond the bounds of probability; so shall success attend thy undertakings, thy heart shall not be vexed with disappointment.

§ 249. JOY and GRIEF.

Let not thy mirth be so extravagant as to intoxicate thy mind, nor thy sorrow so heavy as to depress thy heart. This world affordeth no good so transporting, nor inflicth any evil so severe, as should raise thee far above, or sink thee much beneath, the balance of moderation.

Lo!

Lo! yonder standeth the house of Joy. It is painted on the outside, and looketh gay; thou mayest know it from the continual noise of mirth and exultation that issueth from it.

The mistress standeth at the door, and calleth aloud to all that pass by; she singeth and shouteth, and laugheth without ceasing.

She inviteth them to go in and taste the pleasures of life, which she telleth them are no where to be found but beneath her roof.

But enter not thou into her gate; neither associate thyself with those who frequent her house.

They call themselves the sons of Joy; they laugh and seem delighted: but madness and folly are in all their doings.

They are linked with mischief hand in hand, and their steps lead down to evil. Dangers beset them round about, and the pit of destruction yawneth beneath their feet.

Look now on the other side, and behold, in that vale, overshadowed with trees and hid from the sight of men, the habitation of Sorrow.

Her bosom heaveth with sighs, her mouth is filled with lamentation; she delighteth to dwell on the subject of human misery.

She looketh on the common accidents of life and weepeth; the weakness and wickedness of man is the theme of her lips.

All nature to her teemeth with evil; every object she seeth is tinged with the gloom of her own mind, and the voice of complaint saddeneth her dwelling day and night.

Come not near her cell; her breath is contagious; she will blast the fruits, and wither the flowers, that adorn and sweeten the garden of life.

In avoiding the house of Joy, let not thy feet betray thee to the borders of this dismal mansion; but pursue with care the middle path, which shall lead thee by a gentle ascent to the bower of Tranquillity.

With her dwelleth Peace, with her dwelleth Safety and Contentment. She is cheerful but not gay; she is serious, but not grave; she vieweth the joys and the sorrows of life with an equal and steady eye.

From hence, as from an eminence, shalt thou behold the folly and the misery of those, who led by the gaiety of their hearts, take up their abode with the companions of Jollity and riotous Mirth; or infected with

Gloominess and Melancholy, spend all their days in complaining of the woes and calamities of human life.

Thou shalt view them both with pity, and the error of their ways shall keep thy feet from straying.

§ 250. ANGER.

As the whirlwind in its fury teareth up trees, and deformeth the face of nature, or as an earthquake in its convulsions overturneth whole cities; so the rage of an angry man throweth mischief around him. Danger and destruction wait on his hand.

But consider, and forget not thine own weakness; so shalt thou pardon the failings of others.

Indulge not thyself in the passion of anger; it is whetting a sword to wound thine own breast, or murder thy friend.

If thou bearest slight provocations with patience, it shall be imputed unto thee for wisdom; and if thou wipest them from thy remembrance, thy heart shall not reproach thee.

Seest thou not that the angry man loseth his understanding? Whilst thou art yet in thy senses, let the wrath of another be a lesson to thyself.

Do nothing in a passion. Why wilt thou put to sea in the violence of a storm?

If it be difficult to rule thine anger, it is wise to prevent it: avoid therefore all occasions of falling into wrath; or guard thyself against them whenever they occur.

A fool is provoked with insolent speeches, but a wise man laugheth them to scorn.

Harbour not revenge in thy breast, it will torment thy heart, and discolour its best inclinations.

Be always more ready to forgive, than to return an injury: he that watches for an opportunity of revenge, lieth in wait against himself, and draweth down mischief on his own head.

A mild answer to an angry man, likewater cast upon the fire, abateth his heat; and from an enemy he shall become thy friend.

Consider how few things are worthy of anger, and thou wilt wonder that any but fools should be wrath.

In folly or weakness it always beginneth; but remember, and be well assured, it seldom concludeth without repentance.

On the heels of Folly treadeth Shame; at the back of Anger standeth Remorse.

§ 251. PITY.

As blossoms and flowers are strewed upon earth by the hand of spring, as the kindness of summer produceth in perfection the bounties of harvest; so the smiles of pity shed blessings on the children of misfortune.

He who pitieth another, recommendeth himself; but he who is without compassion, deserveth it not.

The butcher relenteth not at the bleating of the lamb; neither is the heart of the cruel moved with distress.

But the tears of the compassionate are sweeter than dew drops falling from roses on the bosom of the spring.

Shut not thine ear therefore against the cries of the poor; neither harden thine heart against the calamities of the innocent.

When the fatherless call upon thee, when the widow's heart is sunk, and she implor-eth thy assistance with tears of sorrow; O pity her affliction, and extend thy hand to those who have none to help them.

When thou seest the naked wanderer of the street, shivering with cold, and destitute of habitation; let bounty open thine heart, let the wings of charity shelter him from death, that thine own soul may live.

Whilst the poor man groaneth on the bed of sickness, whilst the unfortunate languish in the horrors of a dungeon, or the hoary head of age lifts up a feeble eye to thee for pity; O how canst thou riot in superfluous enjoyments, regardless of their wants, unfeeling of their woes!

§ 252. DESIRE and LOVE.

Beware, young man, beware of the allurements of wantonness, and let not the harlot tempt thee to excess in her delights.

The madness of desire shall defeat its own pursuits; from the blindness of its rage thou shalt rush upon destruction.

Therefore give not up thy heart to her sweet enticements, neither suffer thy soul to be enslaved by her enchanting delusion.

The fountain of health, which must supply the stream of pleasure, shall quickly be dried up, and every spring of joy shall be exhausted.

In the prime of thy life old age shall

overtake thee; thy sun shall decline in the morning of thy days.

But when virtue and modesty enlighten her charms, the lustre of a beautiful woman is brighter than the stars of heaven, and the influence of her power it is in vain to resist.

The whiteness of her bosom transcendeth the lily; her smile is more delicious than a garden of roses.

The innocence of her eye is like that of the turtle; simplicity and truth dwell in her heart.

The kisses of her mouth are sweeter than honey; the perfumes of Arabia breathe from her lips.

Shut not thy bosom to the tenderness of love; the purity of its flame shall ennoble thy heart, and soften it to receive the fairest impressions.

§ 253. WOMAN.

Give ear, fair daughter of love, to the instructions of prudence, and let the precepts of truth sink deep in thy heart, so shall the charms of thy mind add lustre to the elegance of thy form; and thy beauty, like the rose it resembleth, shall retain its sweetness when its bloom is withered.

In the spring of thy youth, in the morning of thy days, when the eyes of men gaze on thee with delight, and nature whispereth in thine ear the meaning of their looks: ah! hear with caution their seducing words; guard well thy heart, nor listen to their soft persuasions.

Remember that thou art made man's reasonable companion, not the slave of his passion; the end of thy being is not merely to gratify his loose desire, but to assist him in the toils of life, to soothe him with thy tenderness, and recompence his care with soft endearments.

Who is she that winneth the heart of man, that subdueth him to love, and reigneth in his breast?

Lo! yonder she walketh in maiden sweetness, with innocence in her mind, and modesty on her cheek.

Her hand seeketh employment, her foot delighteth not in gadding abroad.

She is clothed with neatness, she is fed with temperance; humility and meekness are as a crown of glory circling her head.

On her tongue dwelleth music, the sweetness of honey floweth from her lips.

Decency

Decency is in all her words, in her answers are mildness and truth.

Submission and obedience are the lessons of her life, and peace and happiness are her reward.

Before her steps walketh prudence, and virtue attendeth at her right hand.

Her eye speaketh softness and love; but discretion with a scepter sitteth on her brow.

The tongue of the licentious is dumb in her presence, the awe of her virtue keepeth him silent.

When scandal is busy, and the fame of her neighbour is tossed from tongue to tongue; if charity and good nature open not her mouth, the finger of silence resteth on her lip.

Her breast is the mansion of goodness, and therefore she suspecteth no evil in others.

Happy were the man that should make her his wife: happy the child that shall call her mother.

She presideth in the house, and there is peace; she commandeth with judgment, and is obeyed.

She ariseth in the morning, she considers her affairs, and appointeth to every one their proper business.

The care of her family is her whole delight, to that alone she applieth her study; and elegance with frugality is seen in her mansions.

The prudence of her management is an honour to her husband, and he heareth her praise with a secret delight.

She informeth the minds of her children with wisdom: she fashioneth their manners from the example of her own goodness.

The word of her mouth is the law of their youth, the motion of her eye commandeth their obedience.

She speaketh, and her servants fly; she pointeth, and the thing is done: for the law of love is in their hearts, and her kindness addeth wings to their feet.

In prosperity she is not puffed up; in adversity she healeth the wounds of fortune with patience.

The troubles of her husband are alleviated by her counsels, and sweetened by her endearments: he putteth his heart in her bosom, and receiveth comfort.

Happy is the man that hath made her his wife; happy the child that calleth her mother.

CONSANGUINITY, or NATURAL RELATIONS.

§ 254. HUSBAND.

Take unto thyself a wife, and obey the

ordinance of God; take unto thyself a wife, and become a faithful member of society.

But examine with care, and fix not suddenly. On thy present choice depends thy future happiness.

If much of her time is destroyed in dress and adornments; if she is enamoured with her own beauty, and delighteth in her own praise; if she laugheth much, and talketh loud: if her foot abideth not in her father's house, and her eyes with boldness rove on the faces of men: though her beauty were as the sun in the firmament of heaven, turn thy face from her charms, turn thy feet from her paths, and suffer not thy soul to be ensnared by the allurements of imagination.

But when thou findest sensibility of heart, joined with softness of manners; an accomplished mind, with a form agreeable to thy fancy; take her home to thy house, she is worthy to be thy friend, thy companion in life, the wife of thy bosom.

O cherish her as a blessing sent thee from heaven. Let the kindness of thy behaviour endear thee to her heart.

She is the mistress of thy house; treat her therefore with respect, that thy servants may obey her.

Oppose not her inclination without cause; she is the partner of thy cares, make her also the companion of thy pleasures.

Reprove her faults with gentleness; exact not her obedience with rigour.

Trust thy secrets in her breast; her counsels are sincere, thou shalt not be deceived.

Be faithful to her bed; for she is the mother of thy children.

When pain and sickness assault her, let thy tenderness soothe her affliction: a look from thee of pity and love shall alleviate her grief, or mitigate her pain, and be of more avail than ten physicians.

Consider the tenderness of her sex, the delicacy of her frame; and be not severe to her weakness, but remember thine own imperfections.

§ 255. FATHER.

Consider thou who art a parent, the importance of thy trust: the being thou hast produced, it is thy duty to support.

Upon thee also it dependeth, whether the child of thy bosom shall be a blessing or a curse to thyself; an useful or a worthless member to the community.

Prepare him early with instruction, and season his mind with the maxims of truth.

Watch the bent of his inclination, ser him

him right in his youth, and let no evil habit gain strength with his years.

So shall he rise like a cedar on the mountains; his head shall be seen above the trees of the forest.

A wicked son is a reproach to his father; but he that doth right is an honour to his grey hairs.

The soil is thine own, let it not want cultivation; the seed which thou sowest, that also shalt thou reap.

Teach him obedience, and he shall bless thee; teach him modesty, and he shall not be ashamed.

Teach him gratitude, and he shall receive benefits; teach him charity, and he shall gain love.

Teach him temperance, and he shall have health; teach him prudence, and fortune shall attend him.

Teach him justice, and he shall be honoured by the world; teach him sincerity, and his own heart shall not reproach him.

Teach him diligence, and his wealth shall increase; teach him benevolence, and his mind shall be exalted.

Teach him science, and his life shall be useful; teach him religion, and his death shall be happy.

§ 256. SON.

From the creatures of God let man learn wisdom, and apply to himself the instruction they give.

Go to the desert, my son; observe the young stork of the wilderness; let him speak to thy heart; he beareth on his wings his aged sire, he lodgeth him with safety, and supplieth him with food.

The piety of a child is sweeter than the incense of Persia offered to the sun; yea more delicious than odours wafted from a field of Arabian spices by the western gales.

Be grateful then to thy father, for he gave thee life; and to thy mother, for she sustained thee.

Hear the words of his mouth, for they are spoken for thy good; give ear to his admonition, for it proceedeth from love.

He hath watched for thy welfare, he hath toiled for thy ease: do honour therefore to his age, and let not his grey hairs be treated with irreverence.

Forget not thy helpless infancy, nor the forwardness of thy youth, and indulge the infirmities of thy aged parents; assist and support them in the decline of life.

So shall their hoary heads go down to the grave in peace; and thine own children, in reverence of thy example, shall repay thy piety with filial love.

§ 257. BROTHERS.

Ye are the children of one father, provided for by his care; and the breast of one mother hath given you suck.

Let the bonds of affection, therefore, unite thee with thy brothers, that peace and happiness may dwell in thy father's house.

And when ye separate in the world, remember the relation that bindeth you to love and unity; and prefer not a stranger to thine own blood.

If thy brother is in adversity, assist him; if thy sister is in trouble, forsake her not.

So shall the fortunes of thy father contribute to the support of his whole race; and his care be continued to you all in your love to each other.

PROVIDENCE; or the accidental Differences in MEN.

§ 258. WISE and IGNORANT.

The gifts of the understanding are the treasures of God; and he appointeth to every one his portion, in what measure seemeth good unto himself.

Hath he endued thee with wisdom? hath he enlightened thy mind with the knowledge of truth? Communicate it to the ignorant, for their instruction; communicate it to the wise, for thine own improvement.

True wisdom is less presuming than folly. The wise man doubteth often, and changeth his mind; the fool is obstinate, and doubteth not; he knoweth all things but his own ignorance.

The pride of emptiness is an abomination; and to talk much is the foolishness of folly. Nevertheless, it is the part of wisdom to bear with patience their impertinence, and to pity their absurdity.

Yet be not puffed up with thine own conceit, neither boast of superior understanding; the clearest human knowledge is but blindness and folly.

The wise man seeleth his imperfections, and is humbled; he laboureth in vain for his own approbation; but the fool peepeth in

in the shallow stream of his own mind, and is pleased with the pebbles which he sees at the bottom: he bringeth them up and sheweth them as pearls; and with the applause of his brethren delighteth he himself.

He boasteth attainments in things that are of no worth; but where it is a shame to be ignorant, there he hath no understanding.

Even in the paths of wisdom he toileth after folly; and shame and disappointment are the reward of his labour.

But the wise man cultivates his mind with knowledge: the improvement of arts is his delight, and their utility to the public crowneth him with honour.

Nevertheless the attainment of virtue he accounteth as the highest learning: and the science of happiness is the study of his life.

§ 259. RICH and POOR.

The man to whom God hath given riches, and blessed with a mind to employ them aright, is peculiarly favoured, and highly distinguished.

He looketh on his wealth with pleasure, because it affordeth him the means to do good.

He seeketh out objects of compassion: he enquireth into their wants; he relieveth with judgment, and without ostentation.

He assisteth and rewardeth merit: he encourageth ingenuity, and liberally promoteth every useful design.

He carrieth on great works: his country is enriched, and the labourer is employed: he formeth new schemes, and the arts receive improvement.

He considereth the superfluities of his table as belonging to the poor of his neighbourhood, and he defraudeth them not.

The benevolence of his mind is not checked by his fortune; he rejoiceth therefore in riches, and his joy is blameless.

But woe unto him that heapeth up wealth in abundance, and rejoiceth alone in the possession thereof:

That grindeth the face of the poor, and considereth not the sweat of their brows.

He thriveth on oppression without feeling; the ruin of his brother disturbeth him not.

The tears of the orphan he drinketh as milk; the cries of the widow are music to his ear.

His heart is hardened with the love of

wealth; no grief nor distress can make impression upon it.

But the curse of iniquity pursueth him: he liveth in continual fear; the anxiety of his mind, and the rapacious desires of his own soul, take vengeance upon him for the calamities he has brought upon others.

O what are the miseries of poverty, in comparison with the gnawings of this man's heart.

Let the poor man comfort himself, yea, rejoice; for he hath many reasons.

He sitteth down to his morsel in peace; his table is not crowded with flatterers and devourers.

He is not embarrassed with a train of dependants, nor teased with the clamours of solicitation.

Debarred from the dainties of the rich, he escapeth also their diseases.

The bread that he eateth, is it not sweet to his taste? the water he drinketh, is it not pleasant to his thirst? yea, far more delicious than the richest draughts of the luxurious.

His labour preserveth his health, and procureth him a repose, to which the downy bed of sloth is a stranger.

He limiteth his desires with humility, and the calm of contentment is sweeter to his soul than all the acquirements of wealth and grandeur.

Let not the rich therefore presume on his riches, nor the poor in his poverty yield to his despondence; for the providence of God dispenseth happiness to them both.

§ 260. MASTERS and SERVANTS.

Repine not, O man, at the state of servitude: it is the appointment of God, and hath many advantages; it removeth thee from the cares and solitudes of life.

The honour of a servant is his fidelity; his highest virtues are submission and obedience.

Be patient therefore under the reproofs of thy master; and when he rebuketh thee answer not again. The silence of thy resignation shall not be forgotten.

Be studious of his interests, be diligent in his affairs, and faithful to the trust which he repositeth in thee.

Thy time and thy labour belong unto him. Defraud him not thereof, for he payeth thee for them.

And thou who art a master, be just to thy servant, if thou expectest from him fidelity;

fidelity; and reasonable in thy commands, if thou expectest a ready obedience.

The spirit of a man is in him; severity and rigour may create fear, but can never command his love.

Mix kindness with reproof, and reason with authority: so shall thy admonitions take place in his heart, and his duty shall become his pleasure.

He shall serve thee faithfully from the motive of gratitude; he shall obey thee cheerfully from the principle of love: and fail not thou, in return, to give his diligence and fidelity their proper reward.

§ 261. MAGISTRATES and SUBJECTS.

O thou, favourite of heaven, whom the sons of men, thy equals, have agreed to raise to sovereign power, and set as a ruler over themselves; consider the ends and importance of their trust, far more than the dignity and height of thy station.

Thou art clothed in purple, and seated on a throne: the crown of majesty investeth thy temples; the scepter of power is placed in thy hand: but not for thyself were these ensigns given; not meant for thine own, but the good of thy kingdom.

The glory of a king is the welfare of his people; his power and dominion resteth on the hearts of his subjects.

The mind of a great prince is exalted with the grandeur of his situation: he resolveth high things, and searcheth for business worthy of his power.

He calleth together the wise men of his kingdom, he consulteth amongst them with freedom, and heareth the opinions of them all.

He looketh among his people with discernment; he discovereth the abilities of men, and employeth them according to their merits.

His magistrates are just, his ministers are wise, and the favourite of his bosom deceiveth him not.

He smileth on the arts, and they flourish; the sciences improve beneath the culture of his hand.

With the learned and ingenious he delighteth himself; he kindleth in their breasts emulation, and the glory of his kingdom is exalted by their labours.

The spirit of the merchant who extendeth his commerce; the skill of the farmer, who enricheth his lands; the ingenuity of the artist, the improvement of the scholar;

all these he honoureth with his favour, or rewardeth with his bounty.

He planteth new colonies; he buildeth strong ships, he openeth rivers for convenience; he formeth harbours for safety; his people abound in riches, and the strength of his kingdom encreaseth.

He frameth his statutes with equity and wisdom; his subjects enjoy the fruits of their labour, in security; and their happiness consists in the observance of the law.

He foundeth his judgments on the principles of mercy; but in the punishment of offenders he is strict and impartial.

His ears are open to the complaints of his subjects; he restraineth the hand of their oppressors, and delivereth them from their tyranny.

His people therefore look up to him as a father, with reverence and love; they consider him as the guardian of all they enjoy.

Their affection unto him begetteth in his breast a love of the public; the security of their happiness is the object of his care.

No murmurs against him arise in their hearts: the machinations of his enemies endanger not his state.

His subjects are faithful, and firm in his cause; they stand in his defence as a wall of brass; the army of a tyrant flieth before them as chaff before the wind.

Security and peace bless the dwellings of his people; glory and strength encircle his throne for ever.

THE SOCIAL DUTIES.

§ 262. BENEVOLENCE.

When thou considerest thy wants, when thou beholdest thy imperfections, acknowledge his goodness, O son of humanity! who honoured thee with reason, endued thee with speech, and placed thee in society, to receive and confer reciprocal helps and mutual obligations.

Thy food, thy cloathing, thy convenience of habitation; thy protection from the injuries, thy enjoyments of the comforts and the pleasures of life: all these thou owest to the assistance of others, and couldst not enjoy but in the bands of society.

It is thy duty therefore to be a friend to mankind; as it is thy interest that man should be friendly to thee.

As the rose breatheth sweetness from its own nature, so the heart of a benevolent man produceth good works.

He enjoyeth the ease and tranquillity of his own breast, and rejoiceth in the happiness and prosperity of his neighbour.

He openeth not his ear unto slander: the faults and the failings of men give a pain to his heart.

His desire is to do good, and he searcheth out the occasions thereof; in removing the oppressions of another he relieveth himself.

From the largeness of his mind, he comprehendeth in his wishes the happiness of all men: and from the generosity of his heart, he endeavoureth to promote it.

§ 263. JUSTICE.

The peace of society dependeth on justice; the happiness of individuals, on the safe enjoyment of all their possessions.

Keep the desires of thy heart, therefore, within the bounds of moderation: let the hand of justice lead them aright.

Cast not an evil eye on the goods of thy neighbour; let whatever is his property be sacred from thy touch.

Let no temptation allure thee, nor any provocation excite thee, to lift up thy hand to the hazard of his life.

Defame him not in his character; bear no false witness against him.

Corrupt not his servant to cheat or forsake him; and the wife of his bosom, O tempt not to sin.

It will be a grief to his heart, which thou canst not relieve; an injury to his life, which no reparation can atone for.

In thy dealings with men be impartial and just; and do unto them as thou wouldst they should do unto thee.

Be faithful to thy trust, and deceive not the man who relieth upon thee; be assured it is less evil in the sight of God to steal, than to betray.

Oppress not the poor, and defraud not of his hire the labouring man.

When thou sellest for gain, hear the whisperings of conscience, and be satisfied with moderation; nor from the ignorance of the buyer make any advantage.

Pay the debts which thou owest, for he who gave thee credit, relied upon thine honour: and to withhold from him his due, is both mean and unjust.

Finally, O son of society! examine thy heart, call remembrance to thy aid; and if in any of these things thou findest thou hast transgressed, take sorrow and shame to thyself, and make speedy reparation to the utmost of thy power.

§ 264. CHARITY.

Happy is the man who hath sown in his breast the seeds of benevolence; the produce thereof shall be charity and love.

From the fountain of his heart shall rise rivers of goodness; and the streams shall overflow for the benefit of mankind.

He assisteth the poor in their trouble; he rejoiceth in furthering the prosperity of all men.

He censureth not his neighbour, he believeth not the tales of envy and malevolence, neither repeateth he their slanders.

He forgiveth the injuries of men, he wipeth them from his remembrance; revenge and malice have no place in his heart.

For evil he returneth not evil; he hateth not even his enemies, but requiteth their injustice with friendly admonition.

The griefs and anxieties of men excite his compassion; he endeavoureth to alleviate the weight of their misfortunes, and the pleasure of success rewardeth his labour.

He calmeth the fury, he healeth the quarrels of angry men, and preventeth the mischiefs of strife and animosity.

He promoteth in his neighbourhood peace and good-will, and his name is repeated with praise and benedictions.

§ 265. GRATITUDE.

As the branches of a tree return their sap to the root from whence it arose; as a river poureth his streams to the sea, where his spring was supplied; so the heart of a grateful man delighteth in returning a benefit received.

He acknowledgeth his obligations with cheerfulness: he looketh on his benefactor with love and esteem.

And if to return it be not in his power, he nourisheth the memory of it in his breast with kindness, he forgetteth it not all the days of his life.

The hand of the generous man is like the clouds of heaven, which drop upon the earth, fruits, herbage, and flowers: but the

the heart of the ungrateful is like a desert of sand, which swalloweth with greediness the showers that fall, and burieth them in its bosom, and produceth nothing.

Envy not thy benefactor, neither strive to conceal the benefit he hath conferred; for though the act of generosity commandeth admiration; yet the humility of gratitude toucheth the heart, and is amiable in the sight both of God and man.

But receive not a favour from the hands of the proud: to the selfish and avaricious have no obligation: the vanity of pride shall expose thee to shame, the greediness of avarice shall never be satisfied.

§ 266. SINCERITY.

O thou who art enamoured with the beauties of truth, and hast fixed thy heart on the simplicity of her charms, hold fast thy fidelity unto her, and forsake her not; the constancy of thy virtue shall crown thee with honour.

The tongue of the sincere is rooted in his heart: hypocrisy and deceit have no place in his words.

He blusheth at falsehood, and is confounded: but in speaking the truth he hath a steady eye.

He supporteth as a man the dignity of his character; to the arts of hypocrisy he scorneth to stoop.

He is consistent with himself; he is never embarrassed; he hath courage enough for truth, but to lie he is afraid.

He is far above the meanness of dissimulation; the words of his mouth are the thoughts of his heart.

Yet with prudence and caution he openeth his lips; he studieth what is right, and speaketh with discretion.

He adviseth with friendship, he reproveth with freedom: and whatsoever he promiseth shall surely be performed.

But the heart of the hypocrite is hid in his breast: he masketh his words in the semblance of truth, while the business of his life is only to deceive.

He laugheth in sorrow, he weepeth in joy; and the words of his mouth have no interpretation.

He worketh in the dark as a mole, and fancieth he is safe; but he blundereth into light, and is betrayed and exposed, with his dirt on his head.

He passeth his days with perpetual constraint: his tongue and his heart are for ever at variance.

He laboureth for the character of a righteous man; and huggeth himself in the thoughts of his cunning.

O fool! fool! the pains which thou takest to hide what thou art, are more than would make thee what thou wouldst seem; and the children of wisdom shall mock at thy cunning, when, in the midst of security, thy disguise is stripped off, and the finger of derision shall point thee to scorn.

§ 267. RELIGION.

There is but one God, the author, the creator, the governor of the world, almighty, eternal, and incomprehensible.

The sun is not God, though his noblest image. He enliveneth the world with his brightness, his warmth giveth life to the products of the earth; admire him as the creature, the instrument of God; but worship him not.

To the One who is supreme, most wise and beneficent, and to him alone, belong worship, adoration, thanksgiving, and praise!

Who hath stretched forth the heavens with his hand, who hath described with his finger the courses of the stars.

Who setteth bounds to the ocean, that it cannot pass; and saith unto the stormy winds, Be still.

Who shaketh the earth, and the nations tremble; who darteth his lightnings, and the wicked are dismayed.

Who calleth forth worlds by the word of his mouth; who smiteth with his arm, and they sink into nothing.

"O reverence the Majesty of the Omnipotent; and tempt not his anger, lest thou be destroyed!"

The providence of God is over all his works; he ruleth and directeth with infinite wisdom.

He hath instituted laws for the government of the world; he hath wonderfully varied them in his beings; and each, by his nature, conformeth to his will.

In the depths of his mind he revolveth all knowledge; the secrets of futurity lie open before him.

The thoughts of thy heart are naked to his view; he knoweth thy determinations before they are made.

With respect to his prescience, there is nothing contingent; with respect to his providence, there is nothing accidental.

Wonderful he is in all his ways; his counsels

counsels are inscrutable; the manner of his knowledge transcendeth thy conception.

"Pay therefore to his wisdom all honour
"and veneration; and bow down thyself
"in humble and submissive obedience to
"his supreme direction."

The Lord is gracious and beneficent; he hath created the world in mercy and love.

His goodness is conspicuous in all his works; he is the fountain of excellence, the centre of perfection.

The creatures of his hand declare his goodness, and all their enjoyments speak his praise; he clotheth them with beauty, he supporteth them with food, he preserveth them with pleasure from generation to generation.

If we lift up our eyes to the heavens, his glory shineth forth; if we cast them down upon the earth, it is full of his goodness; the hills and the vallies rejoice and sing; fields, rivers, and woods resound his praise.

But thee, O man, he hath distinguished with peculiar favour; and exalted thy station above all creatures.

He hath endued thee with reason, to maintain thy dominion: he hath fitted thee with language, to improve by society; and exalted thy mind with the powers of meditation to contemplate and adore his inimitable perfections.

And in the laws he hath ordained as the rule of thy life, so kindly hath he suited thy duty to thy nature, that obedience to his precepts is happiness to thyself.

"O praise his goodness with songs of
"thanksgiving; and meditate in silence on
"the wonders of his love; let thy heart
"overflow with gratitude and acknow-
"ledgment; let the language of thy lips
"speak praise and adoration; let the
"actions of thy life shew thy love to his
"law."

The Lord is just and righteous, and will judge the earth with equity and truth.

Hath he established his laws in goodness and mercy, and shall he not punish the transgressors thereof?

O think not, bold man! because thy punishment is delayed, that the arm of the Lord is weakened; neither flatter thyself with hopes that he winketh at thy doings.

His eye pierceth the secrets of every heart, and he remembereth them for ever; he respecteth not the persons or the stations of men.

The high and the low, the rich and the poor, the wise and the ignorant, when the

soul hath shaken off the cumbrous shackles of this mortal life, shall equally receive from the sentence of God a just and everlasting retribution according to their works.

Then shall the wicked tremble and be afraid; but the heart of the righteous shall rejoice in his judgments.

"O fear the Lord, therefore, all the
"days of thy life, and walk in the paths
"which he hath opened before thee. Let
"prudence admonish thee, let temperance
"restrain, let justice guide thy hand, bene-
"volence warm thy heart, and gratitude
"to heaven inspire thee with devotion.
"These shall give thee happiness in thy
"present state, and bring thee to the man-
"sions of eternal felicity, in the paradise
"of God."

This is the true ECONOMY of HUMAN LIFE.

ECONOMY of HUMAN LIFE.

Part II. *Man considered in the general—*

Considered in regard to his infirmities and their effects—The advantages he may acquire over his fellow-creatures—Natural accidents.

MAN considered in the General.

§ 268. *Of the HUMAN FRAME and STRUCTURE.*

Weak and ignorant as thou art, O man! humble as thou oughtest to be, O child of the dust! wouldst thou raise thy thoughts to infinite wisdom? wouldst thou see Omnipotence displayed before thee; contemplate thine own frame.

Fearfully and wonderfully art thou made; praise therefore thy Creator with awe, and rejoice before him with reverence.

Wherefore of all creatures art thou only erect, but that thou shouldst behold his works! wherefore art thou to behold, but that thou mayst admire them! wherefore to admire, but that thou mayst adore them and thy Creator!

Wherefore is consciousness reposed in thee alone? and whence is it derived to thee?

It is not in flesh to think; it is not in bones to reason. The lion knoweth not that worms shall eat him; the ox perceiveth not that he is fed for slaughter.

Something is added to thee unlike to what

what thou seest: something informs thy clay, higher than all that is the object of thy senses. Behold, what is it?

Thy body remaineth perfect after it is fled, therefore it is no part of it; it is immaterial, therefore it is eternal; it is free to act, therefore it is accountable for its actions.

Knoweth the use of food, because his teeth mow down the herbage; or standeth the crocodile erect although his back-bone is as straight as thine?

God formed thee as he had formed these: after them all wert thou created; superiority and command were given thee over all, and of his own breath did he communicate to thee thy principle of knowledge.

Know thyself then the pride of his creation, the link uniting divinity and matter; behold a part of God himself within thee; remember thine own dignity, nor dare to descend to evil or meanness.

Who planted terror in the tail of the serpent? who clothed the neck of the horse with thunder? even he who hath instructed thee to crush the one under thy feet, and to tame the other to thy purposes.

§ 269. *Of the Use of the SENSES.*

Vaunt not of thy body, because it was first formed; nor of thy brain, because therein thy soul resideth. Is not the master of the house more honourable than its walls?

The ground must be prepared before corn be planted; the potter must build his furnace before he can make his porcelain.

As the breath of Heaven sayeth unto the waters of the deep, This way shall thy billows roll, and no other; thus high and no higher shall they raise their fury; so let thy spirit, O man, actuate and direct thy flesh; so let it repress its wildness.

Thy soul is the monarch of thy frame; suffer not its subjects to rebel against it.

Thy body is as the globe of the earth, thy bones the pillars that sustain it on its basis.

As the ocean giveth rise to springs, whose waters return again into its bosom through the rivers, so runneth thy life from thy heart outwards, and so runneth it into its place again.

Do not both retain their course for ever? Behold, the same God ordaineth them.

Is not thy nose the channel to perfumes? thy mouth the path to delicacies? Yet know

thou that perfumes long smelt become offensive, that delicacies destroy the appetite they flatter.

Are not thine eyes the centinels that watch for thee? yet how often are they unable to distinguish truth from error?

Keep thy soul in moderation, teach thy spirit to be attentive to its good; so shall these its ministers be always open to the conveyances of truth.

Thine hand is it not a miracle? is there in the creation aught like unto it? wherefore was it given thee, but that thou mightest stretch it out to the assistance of thy brother?

Why of all things living art thou alone made capable of blushing? the world shall read thy shame upon thy face; therefore do nothing shameful.

Fear and dismay, why rob they the countenance of its ruddy splendour? Avoid guilt, and thou shalt know that fear is beneath thee; that dismay is unmanly.

Wherefore to thee alone speak shadows in the visions of thy pillow? Reverence them; for know that dreams are from on high.

Thou man alone canst speak. Wonder at thy glorious prerogative; and pay to him who gave it thee a rational and welcome praise, teaching thy children wisdom, instructing the offspring of thy loins in piety.

§ 270. *THE SOUL OF MAN, its ORIGIN and AFFECTIONS.*

The blessings, O man! of thy external part, are health, vigour, and proportion. The greatest of these is health. What health is to the body, even that is honesty to the soul.

That thou hast a soul, is of all knowledge the most certain, of all truths the most plain unto thee. Be meek, be grateful for it. Seek not to know it gratefully: it is inscrutable.

Thinking, understanding, reasoning, willing, call not these the soul! They are its actions, but they are not its essence.

Raise it not too high, that thou be not despised. Be not thou like unto those who fall by climbing; neither debase it to the sense of brutes; nor be thou like unto the horse and the mule, in whom there is no understanding.

Search it by its faculties; know it by its virtues. They are more in number than

than the hairs of thy head; the stars of heaven are not to be counted with them.

Think not with Arabia, that one soul is parted among all men; neither believe thou with the sons of Egypt, that every man hath many: know, that as thy heart, so also thy soul is one.

Doth not the sun harden the clay? doth it not also soften the wax? As it is one sun that worketh both, even so it is one soul that willet contraries.

As the moon retaineth her nature though darkness spread itself before her face as a curtain, so the soul remaineth perfect even in the bosom of a fool.

She is immortal; she is unchangeable; she is alike in all. Health calleth her forth to shew her loveliness, and application anointeth her with the oil of wisdom.

Although she shall live after thee, think not she was born before thee. She was concreated with thy flesh, and formed with thy brain.

Justice could not give her to thee exalted by virtues, nor mercy deliver her to thee deformed by vices. These must be thine, and thou must answer for them.

Suppose not death can shield thee from examination; think not corruption can hide thee from inquiry. He who formed thee of thou knowest not what, can he not raise thee to thou knowest not what again?

Perceiveth not the cock the hour of midnight? Exalteth he not his voice, to tell thee it is morning? Knoweth not the dog the footsteps of his master? and lieth not the wounded goat unto the herb that healeth him? Yet when these die, their spirit returneth to the dust: thine alone surviveth.

Envy not to these their senses, because quicker than thine own. Learn that the advantage lieth not in possessing good things, but in the knowing to use them.

Hadst thou the ear of a stag, or were thine eye as strong and piercing as the eagle's; didst thou equal the hounds in smell, or could the ape resign to thee his taste, or the tortoise her feeling; yet without reason, what would they avail thee? Perish not all these like their kindred?

Hath any one of them the gift of speech? Can any say unto thee, Therefore did I so?

The lips of the wise are as the doors of a cabinet; no sooner are they opened, but treasures are poured out before thee.

Like unto trees of gold arranged in beds of silver, are wise sentences uttered in due season.

Canst thou think too greatly of thy soul? or can too much be said in its praise? It is the image of him who gave it.

Remember thou its dignity for ever; forget not how great a talent is committed to thy charge.

Whatsoever may do good may also do harm. Beware that thou direct her course to virtue.

Think not that thou canst lose her in the crowd; suppose not that thou canst bury her in thy closet. Action is her delight, and she will not be withheld from it.

Her motion is perpetual; her attempts are universal; her agility is not to be suppressed. Is it at the uttermost parts of the earth? she will have it: Is it beyond the region of the stars? yet will her eye discover it.

Inquiry is her delight. As one who traverseth the burning sands in search of water, so is the soul that searcheth after knowledge.

Guard her, for she is rash; restrain her, for she is irregular: correct her, for she is outrageous; more supple is she than water, more flexible than wax, more yielding than air. Is there aught can bind her?

As a sword in the hand of a madman, even so is the soul to him who wanteth discretion.

The end of her search is truth; her means to discover it are reason and experience. But are not these weak, uncertain, and fallacious? How then shall she attain unto it?

General opinion is no proof of truth, for the generality of men are ignorant.

Perceivest thou of thyself, the knowledge of him who created thee, the sense of the worship thou owest unto him? are not these plain before thy face? And behold! what is there more that man needeth to know?

§ 271. Of the PERIOD and Uses of HUMAN LIFE.

As the eye of morning to the lark, as the shade of evening to the owl, as honey to the bee, or as the carcase unto the vulture; even such is life unto the heart of man.

Though bright, it dazzleth not; though obscure, it displeaseth not; though sweet, it cloyeth not; though corrupt, it forbideth not; yet who is he that knoweth its true value?

Learn to esteem life as it ought; then art thou near the pinnacle of wisdom.

B b

Think

Think not with the fool, that nothing is more valuable: nor believe with the pretended wise, that thou oughtest to condemn it. Love it not for itself, but for the good it may be of to others.

Gold cannot buy it for thee; neither can mines of diamonds purchase back the moment thou hast now lost of it. Employ the succeeding ones in virtue.

Say not, that it were best not to have been born; or if born, that it had been best to die early: neither dare thou to ask of thy Creator, Where had been the evil that I had not existed? Good is in thy power; the want of good is evil; and if the question be just, lo! it condemneth thee.

Would the fish swallow the bait if he knew the hook was hidden therein? would the lion enter the toils if he saw they were prepared for him? so neither were the soul to perish with this clay, would man wish to live? neither would a merciful God have created him: know hence thou shalt live afterward.

As the bird is inclosed in the cage before he seeth it, yet teareth not his flesh against its sides; so neither labour thou vainly to run from the state thou art in; but know it is allotted thee, and be content with it.

Though its ways are uneven, yet are they not all painful. Accommodate thyself to all; and where there is least appearance of evil, suspect the greatest danger.

When thy bed is straw, thou sleepest in security; but when thou stretchest thyself on roses, beware of the thorns.

A good death is better than an evil life: strive therefore to live as long as thou oughtest, not as long as thou canst. While thy life is to others worth more than thy death, it is thy duty to preserve it.

Complain not with the fool, with the shortness of thy time: remember that with thy days, thy cares are shortened.

Take from the period of thy life the useless parts of it, and what remaineth? Take off the time of thine infancy, the second infancy of age, thy sleep, thy thoughtless hours, thy days of sickness: and even at the fulness of years, how few seasons hast thou truly numbered.

He who gave thee life as a blessing, shortened it to make it more so. To what end would longer life have served thee? Wistest thou to have had an opportunity of more vices? As to the good, will not he who limited thy span, be satisfied with the fruits of it?

To what end, O child of sorrow! wouldst thou live longer? to breathe, to eat, to see the world? All this thou hast done often already. Too frequent repetition, is it not tiresome? or is it not superfluous?

Wouldst thou improve thy wisdom and thy virtue? Alas! what art thou to know? or who is it that shall teach thee? Badly thou employest the little that thou hast, dare not, therefore, to complain that more is not given thee.

Repine not at the want of knowledge; it must perish with thee in the grave. Be honest here, thou shalt be wise hereafter.

Say not unto the crow, why numberest thou seven times the age of thy lord? or to the fawn, why are thine eyes to see my offspring to an hundredth generations? Are these to be compared with thee in the abuse of life? are they riotous? are they cruel? are they ungrateful? Learn from them rather, that innocence of life and simplicity of manners are the paths to a good old age.

Knowest thou to employ life better than these? then less of it may suffice thee.

Man who dares enslave the world when he knows he can enjoy his tyranny but a moment, what would he not aim at if he were immortal?

Enough hast thou of life, but thou regardest it not: thou art not in want of it; O man! but thou art prodigal: thou throwest it lightly away, as if thou hadst more than enough; and yet thou repinest that it is not gathered again unto thee?

Know that it is not abundance which maketh rich, but economy.

The wise continueth to live from his first period; the fool is always beginning.

Labour not after riches first, and think thou afterwards wilt enjoy them. He who neglecteth the present moment, throweth away all he hath. As the arrow passeth through the heart, while the warrior knew not that it was coming; so shall his life be taken away before he knoweth that he hath it.

What then is life, that man should desire it? what breathing, that he should covet it?

Is it not a scene of delusion, a series of misadventures, a pursuit of evils linked on all sides together? In the beginning it is ignorance, pain is in its middle, and its end is sorrow.

As one wave pusheth on another till both are involved in that behind them, even so succeedeth evil to evil in the life of man;

the greater and the present swallow up the lesser and the past. Our terrors are real evils; our expectations look forward into improbabilities.

Fools, to dread as mortals, and to desire as if immortal!

What part of life is it that we would wish to remain with us? Is it youth? can we be in love with outrage, licentiousness, and temerity? Is it age? then we are fond of infirmities.

It is said, grey hairs are revered, and in length of days is honour. Virtue can add reverence to the bloom of youth; and without it age plants more wrinkles in the soul than on the forehead.

Is age respected because it hateth riot? What justice is in this, when it is not age that despiseth pleasure, but pleasure that despiseth age.

Be virtuous while thou art young, so shall thine age be honoured.

Man considered in regard to his Infirmities, and their Effects.

§ 272. VANITY.

Inconstancy is powerful in the heart of man; intemperance swayeth it whither it will; despair engrosseth much of it; and fear proclaimeth, Behold, I sit unrivalled therein! but vanity is beyond them all.

Weep not therefore at the calamities of the human state; rather laugh at its follies. In the hands of the man addicted to vanity, life is but the shadow of a dream.

The hero, the most renowned of human characters, what is he but the bubble of this weakness! the public is unstable and ungrateful; why should the man of wisdom endanger himself for fools?

The man who neglecteth his present concerns, to revolve how he will behave when greater, feedeth himself with wind, while his bread is eaten by another.

Act as becometh thee in thy present station; and in more exalted ones thy face shall not be ashamed.

What blindeth the eye, or what hideth the heart of a man from himself like vanity? Lo! when thou seest not thyself, then others discover thee most plainly.

As the tulip that is gaudy without smell, conspicuous without use; so is the man who setteth himself up on high, and hath not merit.

The heart of the vain is troubled while it seemeth content; his cares are greater than his pleasures.

His solicitude cannot rest with his bones; the grave is not deep enough to hide it; he extendeth his thoughts beyond his being: he bespeaketh praise to be paid when he is gone: but whose promiseth it, deceiveth him.

As the man that engageth his wife to remain in widowhood, that she disturb not his soul; so is he who expecteth that praise shall reach his ears beneath the earth, or cherish his heart in its shroud.

Do well while thou livest; but regard not what is said of it. Content thyself with deserving praise, and thy posterity shall rejoice in hearing it.

As the butterfly, who seeth not her own colours; as the jessamine, which feeleth not the scent it casteth around; so is the man who appeareth gay, and biddeth others to take notice of it.

To what purpose, saith he, is my vesture of gold? to what end are my tables filled with dainties, if no eye gaze upon them? if the world know it not? Give thy raiment to the naked, and thy food unto the hungry; so shalt thou be praised, and feel that thou deservest it.

Why bestowest thou on every man the flattery of unmeaning words! Thou knowest when returned thee, thou regarded it not. He knoweth he lieth unto thee; yet he knoweth thou wilt thank him for it. Speak in sincerity, and thou shalt hear with instruction.

The vain delighteth to speak of himself; but he seeth not that others like not to hear him.

If he have done any thing worth praise, if he possess that which is worthy admiration, his joy is to proclaim it, his pride is to hear it reported. The desire of such a man defeateth itself. Men say not, Behold, he hath done it; or, See, he possesseth it; but, mark how proud he is of it!

The heart of man cannot attend at once to many things. He who fixeth his soul on these, loseth reality. He pursueth bubbles which break in their flight, while he treads to earth what would do him honour.

§ 273. INCONSTANCY.

Nature urgeth thee to inconstancy. O man! Therefore guard thyself at all times against it.

Thou art from the womb of thy mother various and wavering. From the loins of thy father inheritest thou instability; how then shalt thou be firm?

Those who gave thee a body, furnished it with weakness; but he who gave thee a soul, armed thee with resolution. Employ it, and thou art wise; be wise, and thou art happy.

Let him who doeth well, beware how he boasteth of it; for rarely it is of his own will.

Is it not the event of an impulse from without, born of uncertainty, enforced by accident, dependent on somewhat else? To these men, and to accident, is due the praise.

Beware of irresolution in the intent of thy actions, beware of instability in the execution; so shalt thou triumph over two great failings of thy nature.

What reproacheth reason more than to act contrarieties? What can suppress the tendencies to these, but firmness of mind?

The inconstant seeth that he changeth, but he knoweth not why; he seeth that he escapeth from himself, but he perceiveth not how. Be thou incapable of change in that which is right, and men will rely upon thee.

Establish unto thyself principles of action, and see that thou ever act according to them.

First know that thy principles are just, and then be thou inflexible in the path of them.

So shall thy passions have no rule over thee; so shall thy constancy ensure thee the good thou possessest, and drive from thy door misfortune. Anxiety and disappointment shall be strangers to thy gates.

Suspect not evil in any one, until thou seekest it: when thou seekest it, forget it not.

Whoso hath been an enemy, cannot be a friend; for man mendeth not of his faults.

How should his actions be right who hath no rule of life? Nothing can be just which proceedeth not from reason.

The inconstant hath no peace in his soul; neither can any be at ease whom he concerneth himself with.

His life is unequal; his motions are irregular; his soul changeth with the weather.

To-day he loveth thee, to-morrow thou art detested by him: and why? himself knoweth not wherefore he loved, or wherefore he now hateth.

To-day he is the tyrant; to-morrow thy servant is less humble: and why? he who is arrogant without power, will be servile where there is no subjection.

To-day he is profuse, to-morrow he grudgeth unto his mouth that which he

should eat. Thus it is with him who knoweth not moderation.

Who shall say of the camelion, he is black, when the moment after, the verdure of the grass overspreadeth him!

Who shall say of the inconstant, he is joyful, when his next breath shall be spent in sighing.

What is the life of such a man but the phantom of a dream? In the morning he riseth happy, at noon he is on the rack: this hour he is a god, the next below a worm: one moment he laugheth, the next he weepeth; he now willeth, in an instant he willeth not, and in another he knoweth not whether he willeth or no.

Yet neither ease or pain have fixed themselves on him; neither is he waxed greater, or become less; neither hath he had cause for laughter, nor reason for his sorrow: therefore shall none of them abide with him.

The happiness of the inconstant is as a palace built on the surface of the sand: the blowing of the wind carrieth away its foundation: what wonder then that it falleth?

But what exalted form is this, that hitherwards directs its even, its uninterrupted course? whose foot is on the earth, whose head is above the clouds?

On his brow sitteth majesty; steadiness is in his port; and in his heart reigneth tranquillity.

Though obstacles appear in the way, he deigneth not to look down upon them; though heaven and earth oppose his passage, he proceedeth.

The mountains sink beneath his tread; the waters of the ocean are dried up under the sole of his foot.

The tyger throweth herself across his way in vain; the spots of the leopard glow against him unregarded.

He marcheth through the embattled legions; with his hand he putteth aside the terrors of death.

Storms roar against his shoulders, but are not able to shake them; the thunder bursteth over his head in vain; the lightning serveth but to shew the glories of his countenance.

His name is RESOLUTION! He cometh from the utmost parts of the earth; he seeth happiness afar off before him; his eye discovereth her temple beyond the limits of the pole.

He walketh up to it, he entereth boldly, and he remaineth there for ever.

Establish

Establish thy heart, O man! in that which is right; and then know the greatest of human praise is to be immutable.

§ 274. WEAKNESS.

Vain and inconstant as thou art, O child of imperfection! how canst thou but be weak? Is not inconstancy connected with frailty? Can there be vanity without infirmity? avoid the danger of the one, and thou shalt escape the mischiefs of the other.

Wherein art thou most weak? in that wherein thou seemest most strong; in that wherein most thou gloriest: even in possessing the things which thou hast: in using the good that is about thee.

Are not thy desires also frail? or knowest thou even what it is thou wouldest wish? When thou hast obtained what most thou soughtest after, behold it contenteth thee not.

Wherefore lovest the pleasure that is before thee its relish? and why appeareth that which is yet to come the sweeter? Because thou art wearied with the good of this, because thou knowest not the evil of that which is not with thee, Know that to be content is to be happy.

Couldest thou chuse for thyself, would thy Creator lay before thee all that thine heart could ask for? would happiness then remain with thee? or would joy dwell always in thy gates?

Alas! thy weakness forbiddeth it; thy infirmity declareth against it. Variety is to thee in the place of pleasure; but that which permanently delighteth must be permanent.

When it is gone, thou repentest the loss of it, though, while it was with thee, thou despisest it.

That which succeedeth it, hath no more pleasure for thee: and thou afterwards quarrest with thyself for preferring it; behold the only circumstance in which thou erreth not!

Is there any thing in which thy weakness appeareth more than in desiring things? It is in the possessing and in the using them.

Good things cease to be good in our enjoyment of them. What nature meant pure sweets, are sources of bitterness to us; from our delights arise pain; from our joys, sorrow.

Be moderate in the enjoyment, and it shall remain in thy possession; let thy joy be founded on reason; and to its end shall sorrow be a stranger.

The delights of love are ushered in by sighs, and they terminate in languishment and dejection. The object thou burnest for, nauseates with satiety: and no sooner hast thou possessed it, but thou art weary of its presence.

Join esteem to thy admiration, unite friendship with thy love; so shalt thou find in the end, content so absolute, that it surpasseth raptures, tranquillity more worth than ecstasy.

God hath given thee no good without its admixture of evil; but he hath given thee also the means of throwing off the evil from it.

As joy is not without the alloy of pain, so neither is sorrow without its portion of pleasure. Joy and grief, though unlike, are united. Our own choice only can give them us entire.

Melancholy itself often giveth delight, and the extremity of joy is mingled with tears.

The best things in the hands of a fool may be turned to his destruction; and out of the worst the wise will find the means of good.

So blended is weakness in thy nature, O man; that thou hast not strength either to be good, or to be evil entirely. Rejoice that thou canst not excel in evil, and let the good that is within thy reach content thee.

The virtues are allotted to various stations. Seek not after impossibilities, nor grieve that thou canst not possess them at all.

Wouldst thou at once have the liberality of the rich, and the contentment of the poor? or shall the wife of thy bosom be despised, because she sheweth not the virtues of the widow?

If thy father sink before thee in the divisions of thy country, can at once thy justice destroy him, and thy duty save his life!

If thou beholdest thy brother in the agonies of a slow death, is it not mercy to put a period to his life, and is it not also death to be his murderer?

Truth is but one; thy doubts are of thine own raising. He who made virtues what they are, planted also in thee a knowledge of their pre-eminence. Act as thy soul dictates to thee, and the end shall be always right.

§ 275. Of the INSUFFICIENCY of KNOWLEDGE.

If there is any thing lovely, if there is any thing desirable, if there is any thing within

within the reach of man that is worthy of praise, is it not knowledge? and yet who is he that attaineth unto it?

The statesman proclaimeth that he hath it; the ruler of the people claimeth the praise of it; but findeth the subject that he possesseth it?

Evil is not requisite to man; neither can vice be necessary to be tolerated: yet how many evils are permitted by the connivance of the laws? how many crimes committed by the decrees of the council?

But be wise, O ruler! and learn, O thou that art to command the nations! One crime authorized by thee, is worse than the escape of ten from punishment.

When thy people are numerous, when thy sons increase about thy table; sendest thou them not out to slay the innocent, and to fall before the sword of him whom they have not offended?

If the object of thy desires demandeth the lives of a thousand, sayest thou not, I will have it? Surely thou forgettest that he who created thee, created also these; and that their blood is as rich as thine.

Sayest thou, that justice cannot be executed without wrong! surely thine own words condemn thee.

Thou who flatterest with false hopes the criminal, that he may confess his guilt; art thou not unto him a criminal? or is thy guilt the less, because he cannot punish it?

When thou commandest to the torture him who is but suspected of ill, darest thou to remember, that thou mayest rack the innocent?

Is thy purpose answered by the event? is thy soul satisfied with his confession? Pain will enforce him to say what is not, as easy as what is; and anguish hath caused innocence to accuse herself.

That thou mayest not kill him without cause, thou dost worse than kill him: that thou mayest prove if he be guilty, thou destroyest him innocent.

O blindness to all truth! O insufficiency of the wisdom of the wise! know when thy judge shall bid thee account for this, thou shalt with ten thousand guilty to have gone free, rather than one innocent then to stand forth against thee.

Insufficient as thou art to the maintenance of justice, how shalt thou arrive at the knowledge of truth? how shalt thou ascend to the footstep of her throne?

As the owl is blinded by the radiance of the sun, so shall the brightness of her

countenance dazzle thee in thy approaches.

If thou wouldst mount up into her throne, first bow thyself at her footstep: If thou wouldst arrive at the knowledge of her, first inform thyself of thine own ignorance.

More worth is she than pearls, therefore seek her carefully: the emerald, and the sapphire, and the ruby, are as dirt beneath her feet; therefore pursue her manfully.

The way to her is labour; attention is the pilot that must conduct thee into her ports. But weary not in the way; for when thou art arrived at her, the toil shall be to thee for pleasure.

Say not unto thyself, Behold, truth breedeth hatred, and I will avoid it; dissimulation raiseth friends, and I will follow it. Are not the enemies made by truth, better than the friends obtained by flattery?

Naturally doth man desire the truth, yet when it is before him, he will not apprehend it; and if it force itself upon him, is he not offended at it?

The fault is not in truth, for that is amiable; but the weakness of men beareth not its splendour.

Wouldst thou see thine own insufficiency more plainly? view thyself at thy devotions! To what end was religion instituted, but to teach thee thine infirmities, to remind thee of thy weakness, to shew thee that from heaven alone thou art to hope for good?

Doth it not remind thee that thou art dust! doth it not tell thee that thou art ashes? And behold repentance is not built on frailty?

When thou givest an oath, when thou swearest thou wilt not deceive; behold it spreadeth shame upon thy face, and upon the face of him that receiveth it. Learn to be just, and repentance may be forgotten; learn to be honest, and oaths are unnecessary.

The shorter follies are, the better: say not therefore to thyself, I will not play the fool by halves.

He that heareth his own faults with patience, shall reprove another with boldness.

He that giveth a denial with reason, shall suffer a repulse with moderation.

If thou art suspected, answer with freedom: whom should suspicion affright, except the guilty?

The tender of heart is turned from his purpose

purpose by supplications, the proud is rendered more obstinate by entreaty, the sense of thine insufficiency commanded thee to hear; but to be just, thou must hear without thy passions.

§ 276. MISERY.

Feeble and insufficient as thou art, O man, in good; frail and inconstant as thou art in pleasure; yet there is a thing in which thou art strong and unshaken. Its name is Misery.

It is the character of thy being, the prerogative of thy nature; in thy breast alone it resideth; without thee there is nothing of it. And behold, what is its source, but thine own passions?

He who gave thee these, gave thee also reason to subdue them; exert it, and thou shalt trample them under thy feet.

Thine entrance into the world, is it not shameful? thy destruction is it not glorious? Lo! men adorn the instruments of death with gold and gems, and wear them above their garments.

He who begetteth a man, hideth his face; but he who killeth a thousand is honoured.

Know thou, notwithstanding, that in this is error. Custom cannot alter the nature of truth; neither can the opinion of men destroy justice; the glory and the shame are misplaced.

There is but one way for man to be produced: there are a thousand by which he may be destroyed.

There is no praise, or honour, to him who giveth being to another; but triumphs and empire are the rewards of murder.

Yet he who hath many children, hath as many blessings; and he who hath taken away the life of another, shall not enjoy his own.

While the savage curseth the birth of his son, and blesteth the death of his father, doth he not call himself a monster?

Enough of evil is allotted unto man; but he maketh it more while he lamenteth it.

The greatest of all human ills is sorrow; too much of this thou art born unto; add not unto it by thy own perverseness.

Grief is natural to thee, and is always about thee; pleasure is a stranger, and visiteth thee but by times: use well thy reason, and sorrow shall be cast behind thee; be prudent, and the visits of joy shall remain long with thee.

Every part of thy frame is capable of

sorrow; but few and narrow are the paths that lead to delight.

Pleasures can be admitted only simply; but pains rush in a thousand at a time.

As the blaze of straw fadeth as soon as it is kindled; so passeth away the brightness of joy, and thou knowest not what is become of it.

Sorrow is frequent; pleasure is rare; pain cometh of itself; delight must be purchased: grief is unmixed; but joy wanteth not its alloy of bitterness.

As the soundest health is less perceived than the slightest malady, so the highest joy toucheth us less deep than the smallest sorrow.

We are in love with anguish; we often fly from pleasure; when we purchase it, costeth it not more than it is worth?

Reflection is the business of man: a sense of his state is his first duty; but who remembereth himself in joy. Is it not in mercy, then, that sorrow is allotted unto us?

Man foreseeth the evil that is to come; he remembereth it when it is past: he considereth not that the thought of affliction woundeth deeper than the affliction itself. Think not of thy pain, but when it is upon thee, and thou shalt avoid what most would hurt thee.

He who weepeth before he needeth, weepeth more than he needeth: and why, but that he loveth weeping?

The stag weepeth not till the spear is lifted up against him; nor do the tears of the beaver fall, till the hound is ready to seize him: man anticipateth death, by the apprehensions of it; and the fear is greater misery than the event itself.

Be always prepared to give an account of thine actions; and the best death is that which is least premeditated.

§ 277. OF JUDGMENT.

The greatest bounties given to man, are judgment and will; happy is he who misapplieth them not.

As the torrent that rolleth down the mountains, destroyeth all that is borne away by it; so doth common opinion overwhelm reason in him who submiteth to it, without saying, What is thy foundation?

See that what thou receivest as truth be not the shadow of it; what thou acknowledgest as convincing, is often but plausible. Be firm, be constant, determine for thyself; so shalt thou be answerable only for thine own weakness.

Say not that the event proveth the wisdom of the action: remember man is not above the reach of accidents.

Condemn not the judgment of another, because it differeth from thine own; may not even both be in an error?

When thou esteemest a man for his titles, and contemneth the stranger because he wanteth them, judgest thou not of the camel by its bridle?

Think not thou art revenged of thine enemy when thou slayest him: thou puttest him beyond thy reach, thou givest him quiet, and thou takest from thyself all means of hurting him.

Was thy mother incontinent, and grieveth it thee to be told of it? Is frailty in thy wife, and art thou pained at the reproach of it? He who despiseth thee for it, condemneth himself. Art thou answerable for the vices of another?

Disregard not a jewel, because thou possessest it; neither enhance thou the value of a thing, because it is another's: possession to the wise addeth to the price of it.

Honour not thy wife the less, because she is in thy power; and despise him that hath said, Would thou love her less? marry her! What hath put her into thy power, but her confidence in thy virtue? shouldst thou love her less for being more obliged to her!

If thou wert just in thy courtship of her, though thou neglectest her while thou hast her, yet shall her loss be bitter to thy soul.

He who thinketh another blest, only because he possesseth her; if he be not wiser than thee, at least he is more happy.

Weigh not the loss thy friend hath suffered by the tears he sheddeth for it; the greatest griefs are above these expressions of them.

Esteem not an action because it is done with noise and pomp; the noblest soul is that which doth great things, and is not moved in the doing them.

Fame astonisheth the ear of him who heareth it; but tranquillity rejoiceth the heart that is possessed of it.

Attribute not the good actions of another to bad causes: thou canst not know his heart; but the world will know by this, that thine is full of envy.

There is not in hypocrisy more vice than folly; to be honest is as easy as to seem so.

Be more ready to acknowledge a benefit than to revenge an injury; so shalt thou

have more benefits than injuries done unto thee.

Be more ready to love than to hate; so shalt thou be loved by more than hate thee.

Be willing to commend, and be slow to censure; so shall praise be upon thy virtues, and the eye of enmity shall be blind to thy imperfections.

When thou doest good, do it because it is good; not because men esteem it: when thou avoidest evil, fly it because it is evil: not because men speak against it: be honest for love of honesty, and thou shalt be uniformly so; he that doth it without principle, is wavering.

With rather to be reproved by the wise, than to be applauded by him who hath no understanding; when they tell thee of a fault, they suppose thou canst improve; the other, when he praiseth thee, thinkest thou like unto himself.

Accept not an office for which thou art not qualified, lest he who knoweth more of it despise thee.

Instruct not another in that wherein thyself art ignorant; when he seeth it, he will upbraid thee.

Expect not a friendship with him who hath injured thee; he who suffereth the wrong, may forgive it; but he who doth it, never will be well with him.

Lay not too great obligations on him thou wishest thy friend; behold! the sense of them will drive him from thee: a little benefit gaineth friendship; a great one maketh an enemy.

Nevertheless, ingratitude is not in the nature of man; neither is his anger irreconcilable: he hateth to be put in mind of a debt he cannot pay; he is ashamed in the presence of him whom he hath injured.

Repine not at the good of a stranger, neither rejoice thou in the evil that befallth thine enemy: wishest thou that others should do thus to thee?

Wouldst thou enjoy the good-will of all men, let thine own benevolence be universal. If thou obtainest it not by this, no other means could give it thee: and know, though thou hast it not, thou hast the greater pleasure of having merited it.

§ 278. PRESUMPTION.

Pride and meanness seem incompatible; but man reconcileth contrarieties: he is at once the most miserable and the most arrogant of all creatures.

Presumption is the bane of reason; it is the

the nurse of error; yet it is congenial with reason in us.

Who is there that judgeth not either too highly of himself, or thinketh too meanly of others?

Our Creator himself escapeth not our presumption: how then shall we be safe from one another?

What is the origin of superstition? and whence ariseth false worship? from our presuming to reason about what is above our reach, to comprehend what is incomprehensible.

Limited and weak as our understandings are, we employ not even their little forces as we ought. We soar not high enough in our approaches to God's greatness; we give not wing enough to our ideas, when we enter into the adoration of divinity.

Man who fears to breathe a whisper against his earthly sovereign, trembles not to arraign the dispensations of his God: he forgetteth his majesty, and rejudgeth his judgments.

He who dareth not repeat the name of his prince without honour, yet blusheth not to call that of his Creator to be witness to a lie.

He who would hear the sentence of the magistrate with silence, yet dareth to plead with the eternal; he attempteth to sooth him with intreaties, to flatter him with promises, to agree with him upon conditions; nay, to brave and murmur at him if his request is not granted.

Why art thou unpunished, O man! in thy impiety, but that this is not thy day of retribution.

Be not like unto those who fight with the thunder; neither dare thou to deny thy Creator thy prayers, because he chastiseth thee. Thy madness in this is on thine own head; thy impiety hurteth no one but thyself.

Why boasteth man that he is the favourite of his Maker, yet neglecteth to pay his thanks and his adorations for it? How suiteth such a life with a belief so haughty?

Man, who is truly but a mote in the wide expanse, believeth the whole earth and heaven to be created for him: he thinketh the whole frame of nature hath interest in his well-being.

As the fool, while the images tremble on the bosom of the water, thinketh that trees, towns, and the wide horizon, are dancing to do him pleasure; so man, while

nature performs her destined course, believes that all her motions are but to entertain his eye.

While he courts the rays of the sun to warm him, he supposeth it made only to be of use to him; while he traceth the moon in her nightly path, he believeth that she was created to do him pleasure.

Fool to thine own pride! be humble! know thou art not the cause why the world holdeth its course; for thee are not made the vicissitudes of summer and winter.

No change would follow if thy whole race existed not; thou art but one among millions that are blessed in it.

Exalt not thyself to the heavens; for, lo, the angels are above thee; nor disdain thy fellow-inhabitants of the earth, though they are inferior to thee. Are they not the work of the same hand?

Thou who art happy by the mercy of thy Creator, how darest thou in wantonness put others of his creatures to torture? Beware that cruelty return not upon thee.

Serve they not all the same universal Master with thee? Hath he not appointed unto each its laws? Hath he not care of their preservation? and darest thou to infringe it?

Set not thy judgment above that of all the earth; neither condemn as falsehood what agreeth not with thine own apprehension. Who gave thee the power of determining for others? or who took from the world the right of choice?

How many things have been rejected, which are now received as truths? How many now received as truths, shall in their turn be despised? Of what then can man be certain?

Do the good that thou knowest, and happiness shall be unto thee. Virtue is more thy business here than wisdom.

Truth and falsehood, have they not the same appearance in what we understand not? what then but our presumption can determine between them?

We easily believe what is above our comprehension: or we are proud to pretend it, that it may appear we understand it. Is not this folly and arrogance?

Who is it that affirms most boldly; who is it that holds his opinion most obstinately? Even he who hath most ignorance: for he also hath most pride.

Every man, when he layeth hold of an opinion, desireth to remain in it; but most of all he who hath most presumption. He contenteth not himself to betray his own

soul;

soul; but he will impose on others to believe in it also.

Say not that truth is established by years, or that in a multitude of believers there is certainty.

One human proposition hath as much authority as another, if reason maketh not the difference.

*Of the AFFECTIONS of MAN,
which are hurtful to himself and others.*

§ 279. COVETOUSNESS.

Riches are not worthy a strong attention; therefore an earnest care of obtaining them is unjustifiable.

The desire of what man calleth good, the joy he taketh in possessing it, is grounded only in opinion. Form not thy opinion from the vulgar; examine the worth of things thyself, and thou shalt not be covetous.

An immoderate desire of riches is a poison lodged in the soul. It contaminates and destroys every thing that was good in it. It is no sooner rooted there, than all virtue, all honesty, all natural affection, fly before the face of it.

The covetous would sell his children for gold; his parent might die ere he would open his coffer; nay, he considereth not himself in respect of it. In the search of happiness he maketh himself unhappy.

As the man who selleth his house to purchase ornaments for the embellishment of it, even so is he who giveth up peace in the search of riches, in hope that he may be happy in enjoying them.

Where covetousness reigneth, know that the soul is poor. Whoso accounteth riches the principal good of man, will throw away all other goods in the pursuit of them.

Whoso feareth poverty as the greatest evil of his nature, will purchase to himself all other evils in the avoiding of it.

Thou fool, is not virtue more worth than riches? is not guilt more base than poverty? Enough for his necessities is in the power of every man; be content with it, and thy happiness shall smile at the sorrows of him who heapeth up more.

Nature hath hid gold beneath the earth, as if unworthy to be seen; silver hath she placed where thou tramplest it under thy feet. Meaneath she not by this to inform thee, that gold is not worthy thy regard, that silver is beneath thy notice?

Covetousness burieth under the ground

millions of wretches; these dig for their hard masters what returneth the injury; what maketh them more miserable than their slaves.

The earth is barren of good things where she hoardeth up treasure: where gold is in her bowels, there no herb groweth.

As the horse findeth not there his graze, nor the mule his provender; as the fields of corn laugh not on the sides of the hills; as the olive holdeth not forth there her fruits, nor the vine her clusters; even so no good dwelleth in the breast of him whose heart broodeth over his treasure.

Riches are servants to the wife; but they are tyrants over the soul of the fool.

The covetous serveth his gold; it serveth not him. He possesseth his wealth as the sick doth a fever; it burneth and tortureth him, and will not quit him until death.

Hath not gold destroyed the virtue of millions? Did it ever add to the goodness of any?

Is it not most abundant with the worst of men? wherefore then shouldst thou desire to be distinguished by possessing it?

Have not the wisest been those who have had least of it? and is not wisdom happiness?

Have not the worst of thy species possessed the greatest portions of it? and hath not their end been miserable?

Poverty wanteth many things; but covetousness denieth itself all.

The covetous can be good to no man; but he is to none so cruel as to himself.

If thou art industrious to procure gold, be generous in the disposal of it. Man never is so happy as when he giveth happiness to another.

§ 280. PROFUSION.

If there be a vice greater than the hoarding up of riches, it is the employing them to useless purposes.

He that prodigally lavisheth that which he hath to spare, robbeth the poor of what nature giveth them a right unto.

He who squandereth away his treasure, refuseth the means to do good: he denieth himself the practice of virtues whose reward is in their hand, whose end is no other than his own happiness.

It is more difficult to be well with riches, than to be at ease under the want of them. Man governeth himself much easier in poverty than in abundance.

Poverty requireth but one virtue, patience, to support it; the rich, if he have

not

not charity, temperance, prudence, and many more, is guilty.

The poor hath only the good of his own state committed unto him; the rich is intrusted with the welfare of thousands.

He that giveth away his treasure wisely, giveth away his plagues: he that retaineth their increase, heapeth up sorrows.

Refuse not unto the stranger that which he wanteth; deny not unto thy brother even that which thou wantest thyself.

Know there is more delight in being without what thou hast given, than in possessing millions which thou knowest not the use of.

§ 281. REVENGE.

The root of revenge is in the weakness of the soul: the most abject and timorous are the most addicted to it.

Who torture those they hate, but cowards? who murder those they rob but women?

The feeling an injury, must be previous to the revenging it; but the noble mind disdaineth to say, It hurts me.

If the injury is not below thy notice, he that doth it unto thee, in that, maketh himself so: wouldst thou enter the lists with thine inferior?

Disdain the man who attempteth to wrong thee; condemn him who would give thee disquiet.

In this thou not only preservest thine own peace, but thou inflicteth all the punishment of revenge, without stopping to employ it against him.

As the tempest and the thunder affect not the sun or the stars, but spend their fury on stones and trees below; so injuries ascend not to the souls of the great, but waste themselves on such as are: those who offer them.

Poorness of spirit will abate revenge; greatness of soul despiseth the offence: nay, it doth good unto him who intended to have disturbed it.

Why seekest thou vengeance, O man! with what purpose is it that thou pursuest it? Thinkest thou to pain thine adversary by it? Know that thyself seekest its greatest torments.

Revenge gnaweth the heart of him who is infected with it, while he against whom it is intended remaineth easy.

It is unjust in the anguish it inflicteth; therefore nature intended it not for thee: needeth he who is injured more pain? or

ought he to add force to the affliction which another has cast upon him?

The man who meditateth revenge is not content with the mischief he hath received; he addeth to his anguish the punishment due unto another: while he whom he seeketh to hurt, goeth his way laughing; he maketh himself merry at this addition to his misery.

Revenge is painful in the intent, and it is dangerous in the execution: seldom doth the axe fall where he who lifted it up intended; and lo, he remembereth not that it must recoil against him.

While the revengeful seeketh his enemy's hurt, he oftentimes procureth his own destruction: while he aimeth at one of the eyes of his adversary, lo, he putteth out both his own.

If he attain not his end, he lamenteth it; if he succeed, he repenteth of it: the fear of justice taketh away the peace of his own soul; the care to hide him from it, destroyeth that of his friend.

Can the death of thine adversary satiate thy hatred? can the setting him at rest restore thy peace?

Wouldst thou make him sorry for his offence, conquer him and spare him: in death he owneth not thy superiority; nor feeleth he more the power of thy wrath.

In revenge there should be a triumph of the avenger; and he who hath injured him, should feel his displeasure; he should suffer pain from it, and should repent him of the cause.

This is the revenge inspired from anger; but that which makes thee great is contempt.

Murder for an injury ariseth only from cowardice: he who inflicteth it, feareth that the enemy may live and avenge himself.

Death endeth the quarrel; but it restoreth not the reputation: killing is an act of caution, not of courage; it may be safe, but it is not honourable.

There is nothing so easy as to revenge an offence; but nothing is so honourable as to pardon it.

The greatest victory man can obtain, is over himself; he that disdaineth to feel an injury, retorteth it upon him who offereth it.

When thou meditateth revenge, thou confessest that thou seekest the wrong: when thou complaineest, thou acknowledgest thyself hurt by it; meanest thou to add this triumph to the pride of thine enemy?

That cannot be an injury which is not felt;

felt; how then can he who despiseth it revenge it?

If thou think it dishonourable to bear an offence, more is in thy power; thou mayest conquer it.

Good offices will make a man ashamed to be thine enemy: greatness of soul will terrify him from the thought of hurting thee.

The greater the wrong, the more glory there is in pardoning it; and by how much more justifiable would be revenge, by so much the more honour is in clemency.

Hast thou a right to be a judge in thine own cause; to be a party in the act, and yet to pronounce sentence on it? Before thou condemnest, let another say it is just.

The revengeful is feared, and therefore he is hated; but he that is endued with clemency, is adored: the praise of his actions remaineth for ever; and the love of the world attendeth him.

§ 282. CRUELTY, HATRED, and ENVY.

Revenge is detestable: what then is cruelty? Lo, it possesseth the mischiefs of the other; but it wanteth even the pretence of its provocations.

Men disown it as not of their nature; they are ashamed of it as a stranger to their hearts: do they not call it inhumanity?

Whence then is her origin? unto what that is human oweth she her existence? Her father is Fear; and behold Dismay, is it not her mother?

The hero listeth his sword against the enemy that resisteth; but no sooner doth he submit, than he is satisfied.

It is not in honour to trample on the object that seareth; it is not in virtue to insult what is beneath it: subdue the insolent, and spare the humble; and thou art at the height of victory.

He who wanteth virtue to arrive at this end, he who hath not courage to ascend thus into it; lo, he supplieth the place of conquest by murder, of sovereignty by slaughter.

He who seareth all striketh at all: why are tyrants cruel, but because they live in terror?

Civil wars are the most bloody, because those who fight in them are cowards: conspirators are murderers, because in death there is silence. Is it not fear that telleth them they may be betrayed?

The cur will tear the carcass, though he

dared not look it in the face while living: the hound that hunteth it to the death, mangleth it not afterwards.

That thou mayest not be cruel, set thyself too high for hatred; that thou mayest not be inhuman, place thyself above the reach of envy.

Every man may be viewed in two lights; in one he will be troublesome, in the other less offensive: chuse to see him in that in which he least hurteth thee; then shalt thou not do hurt unto him.

What is there that a man may not turn unto his good? In that which offendeth us most, there is more ground for complaint than hatred. Man would be reconciled to him of whom he complaineth: whom murdereth he, but him whom he hateth?

If thou art prevented of a benefit, fly not into rage: the loss of thy reason is the want of a greater.

Because thou art robbed of thy cloak, wouldst thou strip thyself of thy coat also?

When thou enviest the man who possesseth honours; when his titles and his greatness raise thy indignation; seek to know whence they came unto him; enquire by what means he was possessed of them, and thine envy will be turned into pity.

If the same fortune were offered unto thee at the same price, be assured, if thou wert wise, thou wouldst refuse it.

What is the pay for titles, but flattery? how doth man purchase power, but by being a slave to him who giveth it?

Wouldst thou lose thine own liberty, to be able to take away that of another? or canst thou envy him who doth so?

Man purchaseth nothing of his superiors but for a price; and that price is it not more than the value? Wouldst thou pervert the customs of the world? wouldst thou have the purchase and the price also?

As thou canst not envy what thou wouldst not accept, disdain this cause of hatred; and drive from thy soul this occasion of the parent of cruelty.

If thou possessest honour, canst thou envy that which is obtained at the expence of it? If thou knowest the value of virtue, pitiest thou not those who have bartered it so meanly?

When thou hast taught thyself to bear the seeming good of men without repining, thou wilt hear of their real happiness with pleasure.

If thou seest good things fall to one who deserveth them, thou wilt rejoice in it: for

virtue

virtue is happy in the prosperity of the virtuous.

He who rejoiceth in the happiness of another, increaseth by it his own.

§ 283. HEAVINESS OF HEART.

The soul of the cheerful forceth a smile upon the face of affliction; but the despondence of the sad deadeneth even the brightness of joy.

What is the source of sadness, but a feebleness of the soul? what giveth it power but the want of spirit? Rouse thyself to the combat, and the quitteth the field before thou strikest.

Sadness is an enemy to thy race, therefore drive her from thy heart; she poisoneth the sweets of thy life, therefore suffer her not to enter thy dwelling.

She raiseth the loss of a straw to the destruction of thy fortune. While she vexeth thy soul about trifles, she robbeth thee of thine attendance to the things of consequence: behold, she but prophesieth what she seemeth to relate unto thee.

She spreadeth drowfiness as a veil over thy virtues: she hideth them from those who would honour thee in beholding them; she entangleth and keepeth them down, while she maketh it most necessary for thee to exert them.

Lo, she oppresseth thee with evil; and she tieth down thine hands, when they would throw the load from off thee.

If thou wouldst avoid what is base, if thou wouldst disdain what is cowardly, if thou wouldst drive from thy heart what is unjust, suffer not sadness to lay hold upon it.

Suffer it not to cover itself with the face of piety; let it not deceive thee with a shew of wisdom. Religion payeth honour to thy Maker; let it not be clouded with melancholy. Wisdom maketh thee happy; know then, that sorrow in her sight is as a stranger.

For what should man be sorrowful; but for afflictions? Why should his heart give up joy, when the causes of it are not removed from him? Is not this being miserable for the sake of misery?

As the mourner who looketh sad because he is hired to do so, who weepeth because his tears are paid for; such is the man who suffereth his heart to be sad, not because he suffereth aught, but because he is gloomy.

It is not the occasion that produceth the sorrow; for, behold, the same thing shall be to another rejoicing.

Ask men if their sadness maketh things better, and they will confess to thee that it

is folly; nay, they will praise him who beareth his ills with patience, who maketh head against misfortune with courage. Applause should be followed by imitation.

Sadness is against nature, for it troubleth her motions: lo, it rendereth distorted whatsoever nature hath made amiable.

As the oak falleth before the tempest, and raiseth not its head again; so boweth the heart of man to the force of sadness, and returneth unto his strength no more.

As the snow melteth upon the mountains, from the rain that trickleth down their sides, even so is beauty washed from off thy cheek by tears: and neither the one nor the other restoreth itself again.

As the pearl is dissolved by the vinegar, which seemeth at first only to obscure its surface; so is thy happiness, O man! swallowed up by heaviness of heart, though at first it seemeth only to cover it as with its shadow.

Behold sadness in the public streets; cast thine eye upon her in the places of resort; avoideth not she every one? and doth not every one fly from her presence?

See how she droopeth her head, like the flower whose root is cut asunder! see how she fixeth her eyes upon the earth! see how they serve her to no purpose but for weeping!

Is there in her mouth discourse? is there in her heart the love of society? is there in her soul, reason? Ask her the cause, she knoweth it not; enquire the occasion, and behold there is none.

Yet doth her strength fail her: lo, at length she sinketh into the grave; and no one saith, What is become of her?

Hast thou understanding, and seest thou not this! hast thou piety, and perceivest thou not thine error?

God created thee in mercy; had he not intended thee to be happy, his beneficence would not have called thee into existence; how darest thou then to fly in the face of Majesty?

Whilst thou art most happy with innocence, thou dost him most honour; and what is thy discontent but murmuring against him?

Created he not all things liable to changes, and darest thou to weep at their changing?

If we know the law of nature, wherefore do we complain of it? if we are ignorant of it, what shall we accuse but our blindness to what every moment giveth us proof of?

Know

Know that it is not thou that art to give laws to the world; thy part is to submit to them as thou findest them. If they distress thee, thy lamentation but addeth to thy torment.

Be not deceived with fair pretences, nor suppose that sorrow healeth misfortune. It is a poison under the colour of a remedy: while it pretendeth to draw the arrow from thy breast, lo, it plungeth it into thine heart.

While sadness separateth thee from thy friends, doth it not say, Thou art unfit for conversation? while she driveth thee into corners, doth she not proclaim that she is ashamed of herself?

It is not in thy nature to meet the arrows of ill fortune unhurt; nor doth reason require it of thee; it is thy duty to bear misfortune like a man; but thou must first also feel it like one.

Tears may drop from thine eyes, though virtue falleth not from thine heart: be thou careful only that there is cause, and that they flow not too abundantly.

The greatness of the affliction is not to be reckoned from the number of tears. The greatest griefs are above these testimonies, as the greatest joys are beyond utterance.

What is there that weakeneth the soul like grief? what depresseth it like sadness?

Is the sorrowful prepared for noble enterprises? or armeth he himself in the cause of virtue?

Subject not thyself to ills, where there are in return no advantages; neither sacrifice thou the means of good unto that which is in itself an evil.

Of the **ADVANTAGES MAN** *may acquire over his Fellow-Creatures.*

§ 284. **NOBILITY and HONOUR.**

Nobility resideth not but in the soul; nor is there true honour except in virtue.

The favour of princes may be bought by vice; rank and titles may be purchased for money: but these are not true honour.

Crimes cannot exalt the man, who commits them, to real glory; neither can gold make men noble.

When titles are the reward of virtue, when the man is set on high who hath served his country; he who bestoweth the honours hath glory, like as he who receiveth them; and the world is benefited by it.

Wouldst thou wish to be raised, and

men know not for what? or wouldst thou that they should say, Why is this?

When the virtues of the hero descend to his children, his titles accompany them well; but when he who possesseth them is unlike him who deserved them, lo, do they not call him degenerate?

Hereditary honour is accounted the most noble; but reason speaketh in the cause of him who hath acquired it.

He who, meritless himself, appealeth to the actions of his ancestors for his greatness, is like the thief who claimeth protection by flying to the pagod.

What good is it to the blind, that his parents could see? what benefit is it to the dumb, that his grandfather was eloquent? even so, what is it to the mean, that their predecessors were noble?

A mind disposed to virtue, maketh great the possessor: and without titles it will raise him above the vulgar.

He will acquire honour while others receive it; and will he not say unto them, Such were the men whom ye glory in being derived from?

As the shadow waiteth on the substance, even so true honour attendeth upon virtue.

Say not that honour is the child of boldness, nor believe thou that the hazard of life alone can pay the price of it: it is not to the action that it is due, but to the manner of performing it.

All are not called to the guiding the helm of state; neither are there armies to be commanded by every one: do well in that which is committed to thy charge, and praise shall remain unto thee.

Say not that difficulties are necessary to be conquered, or that labour and danger must be in the way of renown. The woman who is chaste, is she not praised? the man who is honest, deserveth he not to be honoured?

The thirst of fame is violent; the desire of honour is powerful; and he who gave them to us, gave them for great purposes.

When desperate actions are necessary to the public, when our lives are to be exposed for the good of our country, what can add force to virtue, but ambition?

It is not the receiving honour that delighteth the noble mind; its pride is the deserveth it.

Is it not better men should say, Why hath not this man a statue? than that they should ask, Why he hath one?

The ambitious will always be first in the croud;

croud; he presseth forward, he looketh not behind him. More anguish is it to his soul, to see one before him, than joy to leave thousands at a distance.

The root of ambition is in every man; but it riseth not in all: fear keepeth it down in some; in many it is suppressed by modesty.

It is the inner garment of the soul; the first thing put on by it with the flesh, and the last it layeth down at its separation from it.

It is an honour to thy nature when worthily employed; when thou directest it to wrong purposes, it shameth and destroyeth thee.

In the breast of the traitor ambition is covered; hypocrisy hideth its face under her mantle; and cool dissimulation furnisheth it with smooth words; but in the end men shall see what it is.

The serpent loseth not his sting though benumbed with the frost, the tooth of the viper is not broken though the cold closeth his mouth: take pity on his state, and he will shew thee his spirit; warm him in thy bosom, and he will requite thee with death.

He that is truly virtuous, loveth virtue for herself; he disdaineth the applause which ambition aimeth after.

How pitiable were the state of virtue, if she could not be happy but from another's praise! she is too noble to seek recompense, and no more will, than can be rewarded.

The higher the sun ariseth, the less shadow doth he make; even so the greater is the virtue, the less doth it covet praise; yet cannot it avoid its reward in honours.

Glory, like a shadow, flieth him who pursueth it; but it followeth at the heels of him who would fly from it: if thou courtest it without merit, thou shalt never attain unto it; if thou deservest it, though thou hidest thyself, it will never forsake thee.

Pursue that which is honourable; do that which is right; and the applause of thine own conscience will be more joy to thee, than the shouts of millions who know not that thou deservest them.

§ 285. SCIENCE and LEARNING.

The noblest employment of the mind of man, is the study of the works of his Creator.

To him whom the science of nature delighteth, every object bringeth a proof of his God; every thing that proveth it, giveth cause of adoration.

His mind is lifted up to heaven every

moment; his life is one continued act of devotion.

Casteth he his eye towards the clouds, findeth he not the heavens full of his wonders? Looketh he down to the earth, doth not the worm proclaim to him, Less than Omnipotence could not have formed me?

While the planets perform their courses; while the sun remaineth in his place; while the comet wandereth through the liquid air, and returneth to its destined road again; who but thy God, O man! could have formed them? what but infinite wisdom could have appointed them their laws?

Behold how awful their splendor! yet do they not diminish: lo, how rapid their motions! yet one runneth not in the way of another.

Look down upon the earth, and see her produce; examine her bowels, and behold what they contain: hath not wisdom and power ordained the whole?

Who biddeth the grass to spring up? who watereth it at its due seasons? Behold the ox croppeth it; the horse and the sheep, feed they not upon it? Who is he that provideth it for them?

Who giveth increase to the corn that thou sowest? who returneth it to thee a thousand fold?

Who ripeneth for thee the olive in its time? and the grape, though thou knowest not the cause of it?

Can the meanest fly create itself; or wert thou aught less than God, couldst thou have fashioned it?

The beasts feel that they exist, but they wonder not at it; they rejoice in their life, but they know not that it shall end: each performeth its course in succession; nor is there a loss of one species in a thousand generations.

Thou who seest the whole as admirable as its parts, canst thou better employ thine eye than in tracing out thy Creator's greatness in them; thy mind, than in examining their wonders?

Power and mercy are displayed in their formation; justice and goodness shine forth in the provision that is made for them; all are happy in their several ways; nor envieth one the other.

What is the study of words compared with this? In what science is knowledge, but in the study of nature?

When thou hast adored the fabric, enquire into its use; for know the earth produceth nothing but may be of good to thee.

Are not food and raiment, and the remedies

dies for thy diseases, all derived from this source alone?

Who is wise then, but he that knoweth it? who hath understanding, but he that contemplateth it? For the rest, whatever science hath most utility, whatever knowledge hath least vanity, prefer these unto the others; and profit from them for the sake of thy neighbour.

To live, and to die; to command, and to obey; to do, and to suffer; are not these all that thou hast farther to care about? Morality shall teach thee these; the Economy of Life shall lay them before thee.

Behold, they are written in thine heart, and thou needest only to be reminded of them: they are easy of conception; be attentive, and thou shalt retain them.

All other sciences are vain, all other knowledge is boast; lo, it is not necessary or beneficial to man; nor doth it make him more good, or more honest.

Piety to thy God, and benevolence to thy fellow creatures, are they not thy great duties? What shall teach thee the one, like the study of his works? what shall inform thee of the other, like understanding thy dependencies?

OF NATURAL ACCIDENTS.

§ 286. PROSPERITY and ADVERSITY.

Let not prosperity elate thine heart above measure; neither depress thy soul unto the grave, because fortune beareth hard against thee.

Her smiles are not stable, therefore build not thy confidence upon them; her frowns endure not for ever, therefore let hope teach thee patience.

To bear adversity well, is difficult; but to be temperate in prosperity, is the height of wisdom.

Good and ill are the tests by which thou art to know thy constancy; nor is there aught else that can tell thee the powers of thine own soul; be therefore upon the watch when they are upon thee.

Behold prosperity, how sweetly she flattereth thee; how insensibly she robbeth thee of thy strength and thy vigour?

Though thou hast been constant in ill fortune, though thou hast been invincible in distress; yet by her thou art conquered: not knowing that thy strength returneth not again; and yet that thou again mayst need it.

Affliction moveth our enemies to pity:

success and happiness cause even our friends to envy.

Adversity is the seed of well-doing: it is the nurse of heroism and boldness; who that hath enough, will endanger himself to have more? who that is at ease, will set his life on the hazard?

True virtue will act under all circumstances; but men see most of its effects when accidents concur with it.

In adversity man seeth himself abandoned by others; he findeth that all his hopes are centered within himself; he rouseth his soul, he encountereth his difficulties, and they yield before him.

In prosperity he fancieth himself safe; he thinketh he is beloved of all that smile about his table; he groweth careless and remiss; he seeth not the danger that is before him; he trusteth to others, and in the end they deceive him.

Every man can advise his own soul in distress; but prosperity blindeth the truth.

Better is the sorrow that leadeth to contentment, than the joy that rendereth man unable to endure distress, and after plungeth himself into it.

Our passions dictate to us in all our extremes: moderation is the effect of wisdom.

Be upright in thy whole life; be content in all its changes: so shalt thou make thy profit out of all occurrences; so shall every thing that happeneth unto thee be the source of praise.

The wise maketh every thing the means of advantage; and with the same countenance beholdeth he all the faces of fortune: he governeth the good, he conquereth the evil: he is unmoved in all.

Presume not in prosperity, neither despair in adversity: court not dangers, nor meanly fly from before them: dare to despise whatever will not remain with thee.

Let not adversity tear off the wings of hope; neither let prosperity obscure the light of prudence.

He who despaireth of the end, shall never attain unto it; and he who seeth not the pit, shall perish therein.

He who calleth prosperity his good; who hath said unto her, With thee will I establish my happiness; lo, he anchoreth his vessel in a bed of sand, which the return of the tide washeth away.

As the water that passeth from the mountains, kisseth, in its way to the ocean, every field that bordereth the rivers; as it tarrieth not in any place; even so fortune visiteth the sons of men; her motion

is incessant, she will not stay; she is unstable as the winds, how then wilt thou hold her? When she kisseth thee, thou art blessed; behold, as thou turnest to thank her, she is gone unto another.

§ 287. PAIN and SICKNESS.

The sickness of the body affecteth even the soul; the one cannot be in health without the other.

Pain is of all ills that which is most felt; and it is that which from nature hath the fewest remedies.

When thy constancy faileth thee, call in thy reason; when thy patience quitteth thee, call in thy hope.

To suffer, is a necessity entailed upon thy nature; wouldst thou that miracles should protect thee from it? or shalt thou repine, because it happeneth unto thee, when lo, it happeneth unto all?

It is injustice to expect exemption from that thou wert born unto; submit with modesty to the laws of thy condition.

Wouldst thou say to the seasons, Pass not on, lest I grow old? is it not better to suffer well that which thou canst not avoid?

Pain that endureth long, is moderate; blush therefore to complain of it: that which is violent is short: behold thou seest the end of it.

The body was created to be subservient to the soul; while thou afflictest the soul for its pains, behold thou settest that above it.

As the wise afflicteth not himself, because a thorn teareth his garment; so the patient grieveth not his soul, because that which covereth it is injured.

§ 288. DEATH.

As the production of the metal proveth the work of the alchymist; so is death the test of our lives, the essay which sheweth the standard of all our actions.

Wouldst thou judge of a life, examine the period of it; the end crowneth the attempt: and where dissimulation is no more, there truth appeareth.

He hath not spent his life ill, who knoweth to die well; neither can he have lost all his time, who employeth the last portion of it to his honour.

He was not born in vain who dieth as he ought; neither hath he lived unprofitably who dieth happily.

He that considereth he is to die, is content while he liveth: he who striveth to forget it, hath no pleasure in any thing;

his joy appeareth to him a jewel which he expecteth every moment he shall lose.

Wouldst thou learn to die nobly? let thy vices die before thee. Happy is he who endeth the business of his life before his death; who, when the hour of it cometh, hath nothing to do but to die; who wisheth not delay, because he hath no longer use for time.

Avoid not death, for it is a weakness; fear it not, for thou understandest not what it is: all that thou certainly knowest, is, that it putteth an end to thy sorrows.

Think not the longest life the happiest; that which is best employed, doth man the most honour; himself shall rejoice after death in the advantages of it.

This is the complete ECONOMY of HUMAN LIFE.

§ 289. A Morning Prayer for a young Student at School, or for the common Use of a School.

Father of All! we return thee most humble and hearty thanks for thy protection of us in the night season, and for the refreshment of our souls and bodies, in the sweet repose of sleep. Accept also our unfeigned gratitude for all thy mercies during the helpless age of infancy.

Continue, we beseech thee, to guard us under the shadow of thy wing. Our age is tender, and our nature frail; and, without the influence of thy grace, we shall surely fall.

Let that influence descend into our hearts; and teach us to love thee and truth above all things. O guard us from temptations to deceit, and grant that we may abhor a lie, both as a sin and as a disgrace.

Inspire us with an abhorrence of the loathsomeness of vice, and the pollutions of sensual pleasure. Grant, at the same time, that we may early feel the delight of conscious purity, and wash our hands in innocency, from the united motives of inclination and of duty.

Give us, O thou Parent of all knowledge, a love of learning, and a taste for the pure and sublime pleasures of the understanding. Improve our memory, quicken our apprehension, and grant that we may lay up such a store of learning, as may fit us for the station to which it shall please thee to call us, and enable us to make great advances in virtue and religion, and shine as lights in the world, by the influence of a good example.

Give us grace to be diligent in our studies,

studies, and that whatever we read we may strongly mark, and inwardly digest it.

Bless our parents, guardians, and instructors; and grant that we may make them the best return in our power, for giving us opportunities of improvement, and for all their care and attention to our welfare. They ask no return, but that we should make use of those opportunities, and co-operate with their endeavours—O grant that we may not disappoint their anxious expectations.

Assist us mercifully, O Lord, that we may immediately engage in the studies and duties of the day, and go through them cheerfully, diligently, and successfully.

Accept our endeavours, and pardon our defects, through the merits of our blessed Saviour, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

§ 290. *An Evening Prayer.*

O Almighty God! again we approach thy mercy-seat, to offer unto thee our thanks and praises for the blessings and protection afforded us this day; and humbly to implore thy pardon for our manifold transgressions.

Grant that the words of various instruction which we have heard or read this day, may be so inwardly grafted in our hearts and memories, as to bring forth the fruits of learning and virtue.

Grant that as we recline on our pillows, we may call to mind the transactions of the day, condemn those things of which our conscience accuses us, and make and keep resolutions of amendment.

Grant that thy holy angels may watch over us this night, and guard us from temptation, excluding all improper thoughts, and filling our breasts with the purest sentiments of piety. Like as the hart panteth for the water-brook, so let our souls thirst for thee, O Lord, and for what-

ever is excellent and beautiful in learning and behaviour.

Correct, by the sweet influence of Christian charity, the irregularities of our temper; and restrain every tendency to ingratitude, and to ill-usage of our parents, teachers, pastors, and masters. Teach us to know the value of a good education, and to be thankful to those who labour in the improvement of our minds and morals. Give us grace to be reverent to our superiors, gentle to our equals or inferiors, and benevolent to all mankind. Elevate and enlarge our sentiments, and let all our conduct be regulated by right reason, attended with Christian charity, and that peculiar generosity of mind, which becomes a liberal scholar, and a sincere Christian.

O Lord, bestow upon us whatever may be good for us, even though we should omit to pray for it; and avert whatever is hurtful, though in the blindness of our hearts we should desire it.

Into thy hands we resign ourselves, as we retire to rest; hoping by thy mercy, to rise again with renewed spirits, to go through the business of the morrow, and to prepare ourselves for this life, and for a blessed immortality; which we ardently hope to attain, through the merits and intercession of thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

§ 291. THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven: Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

ELEGANT EXTRACTS IN PROSE.

BOOK THE SECOND.

CLASSICAL AND HISTORICAL.

§ 1. *Beneficial Effects of a Taste for the BELLES LETTRES.*

BELLES Lettres and Criticism chiefly consider Man as a being endowed with those powers of taste and imagination; which were intended to embellish his mind, and to supply him with rational and useful entertainment. They open a field of investigation peculiar to themselves. All that relates to beauty, harmony, grandeur, and elegance; all that can soothe the mind, gratify the fancy, or move the affections, belongs to their province. They present human nature under a different aspect from that which it assumes when viewed by other sciences. They bring to light various springs of action, which, without their aid, might have passed unobserved; and which, though of a delicate nature, frequently exert a powerful influence on several departments of human life.

Such studies have also this peculiar advantage, that they exercise our reason without fatiguing it. They lead to enquiries acute, but not painful; profound, but not dry nor abstruse. They strew flowers in the path of science; and while they keep the mind bent, in some degree, and active, they relieve it at the same time from that more toilsome labour to which it must submit in the acquisition of necessary erudition, or the investigation of abstract truth.

Blair.

§ 2. *Beneficial Effects of the Cultivation of TASTE.*

The cultivation of Taste is further recommended by the happy effects which it naturally tends to produce on human

life. The most busy man, in the most active sphere, cannot be always occupied by business. Men of serious professions cannot always be on the stretch of serious thought. Neither can the most gay and flourishing situations of fortune afford any man the power of filling all his hours with pleasure. Life must always languish in the hands of the idle. It will frequently languish even in the hands of the busy, if they have not some employment subsidiary to that which forms their main pursuit. How then shall these vacant spaces, those unemployed intervals, which, more or less, occur in the life of every one, be filled up? How can we contrive to dispose of them in any way that shall be more agreeable in itself, or more consonant to the dignity of the human mind, than in the entertainments of taste, and the study of polite literature? He who is so happy as to have acquired a relish for these, has always at hand an innocent and irreproachable amusement for his leisure hours, to save him from the danger of many a pernicious passion. He is not in hazard of being a burden to himself. He is not obliged to stoop to low company, or to court the riot of loose pleasures, in order to cure the tediousness of existence.

Providence seems plainly to have pointed out this useful purpose, to which the pleasures of taste may be applied, by interposing them in a middle station between the pleasures of sense, and those of pure intellect. We were not designed to grovel always among objects so low as the former; nor are we capable of dwelling constantly in so high a region as the latter.

The pleasures of taste refresh the mind after the toils of the intellect, and the labours of abstract study; and they gradually raise it above the attachments of sense, and prepare it for the enjoyments of virtue.

So consonant is this to experience, that in the education of youth, no object has in every age appeared more important to wise men than to tincture them early with a relish for the entertainments of taste. The transition is commonly made with ease from these to the discharge of the higher and more important duties of life. Good hopes may be entertained of those whose minds have this liberal and elegant turn. It is favourable to many virtues. Whereas to be entirely devoid of relish for eloquence, poetry, or any of the fine arts, is justly construed to be an unpromising symptom of youth; and raises suspicions of their being prone to low gratifications, or destined to drudge in the more vulgar and illiberal pursuits of life.

Blair.

§ 3. *Improvement of TASTE connected with Improvement in VIRTUE.*

There are indeed few good dispositions of any kind with which the improvement of taste is not more or less connected. A cultivated taste increases sensibility to all the tender and humane passions, by giving them frequent exercise; while it tends to weaken the more violent and fierce emotions.

— *Ingenus didicisse fideliter artes
Emollit mores, nec sinit esse ferus.*

The elevated sentiments and high examples which poetry, eloquence, and history are often bringing under our view, naturally tend to nourish in our minds public spirit, the love of glory, contempt of external fortune, and the admiration of what is truly illustrious and great.

I will not go so far as to say that the improvement of taste and of virtue is the same; or that they may always be expected to co-exist in an equal degree. More powerful correctives than taste can apply, are necessary for reforming the corrupt propensities which too frequently prevail among mankind. Elegant speculations are sometimes found to float on the surface of the mind, while bad passions possess the interior regions of the heart. At the same time this cannot but be admitted, that the

* These polish'd arts have humanis'd mankind,
Soft'n'd the rude, and calm'd the boist'rous mind.

exercise of taste is, in its native tendency, moral and purifying. From reading the most admired productions of genius, whether in poetry or prose, almost every one rises with some good impressions left on his mind; and though these may not always be durable, they are at least to be ranked among the means of disposing the heart to virtue. One thing is certain, and I shall hereafter have occasion to illustrate it more fully, that, without possessing the virtuous affections in a strong degree, no man can attain eminence in the sublime parts of eloquence. He must feel what a good man feels, if he expects greatly to move or to interest mankind. They are the ardent sentiments of honour, virtue, magnanimity, and public spirit, that only can kindle that fire of genius, and call up into the mind those high ideas, which attract the admiration of ages; and if this spirit be necessary to produce the most distinguished efforts of eloquence, it must be necessary also to our relishing them with proper taste and feeling. *Ibid.*

§ 4. *ON STYLE.*

It is not easy to give a precise idea of what is meant by Style. The best definition I can give of it is, the peculiar manner in which a man expresses his conceptions, by means of Language. It is different from mere Language or words. The words, which an author employs, may be proper and faultless; and his Style, may, nevertheless, have great faults; it may be dry, or stiff, or feeble, or affected. Style has always some reference to an author's manner of thinking. It is a picture of the ideas which rise in his mind, and of the manner in which they rise there; and hence, when we are examining an author's composition, it is, in many cases, extremely difficult to separate the Style from the sentiment. No wonder these two should be so intimately connected, as Style is nothing else, than that sort of expression which our thoughts most readily assume. Hence, different countries have been noted for peculiarities of Style, suited to their different temper and genius. The eastern nations animated their style with the most strong and hyperbolic figures. The Athenians, a polished and acute people, formed a Style, accurate, clear, and neat. The Asiatics, gay and loose in their manners, affected a Style florid and diffuse. The like sort of characteristic differences are commonly remarked in the Style of the French, the

the English, and the Spaniards. In giving the general characters of Style, it is usual to talk of a nervous, a feeble, or a spirited Style; which are plainly the characters of a writer's manner of thinking, as well as of expressing himself: so difficult it is to separate these two things from one another. Of the general characters of Style, I am afterwards to discourse; but it will be necessary to begin with examining the more simple qualities of it; from the assemblage of which its more complex denominations, in a great measure, result.

All the qualities of a good Style may be ranged under two heads, Perspicuity and Ornament. For all that can possibly be required of Language is, to convey our ideas clearly to the minds of others; and, at the same time, in such a dress, as, by pleasing and interesting them, shall most effectually strengthen the impressions which we seek to make. When both these ends are answered, we certainly accomplish every purpose for which we use Writing and Discourse. *Blair.*

§ 5. ON PERSPICUITY.

Perspicuity, it will be readily admitted, is the fundamental quality of Style*; a quality so essential in every kind of writing, that for the want of it nothing can atone. Without this, the richest ornaments of Style only glimmer through the dark; and puzzle, instead of pleasing, the reader. This, therefore, must be our first object, to make our meaning clearly and fully understood, and understood without the least difficulty. "Oratio," says Quintilian, "debet negligenter quoque audientibus esse aperta; ut in animum audientis, sicut sol in oculos, etiam in eum non intendatur, occurrat. Quarre, non solum ut intelligere possit, sed ne omnino possit non intelligere, curandum †." If we are obliged to follow a writer with much care, to pause, and to read over his sentences a second time, in order to comprehend them fully, he will never please us

* "Nobis prima sit virtus, perspicuitas, propria verba, rectus ordo, non in longum dilata conclusio; nihil neque desit, neque superfluit." *Quintil. lib. viii.*

† "Discourse ought always to be obvious, even to the most careless and negligent hearer; so that the sense shall strike his mind, as the light of the sun does our eyes, though they are not directed upwards to it. We must study, not only that every hearer may understand us, but that it shall be impossible for him not to understand us."

long. Mankind are too indolent to relish so much labour. They may pretend to admire the author's depth after they have discovered his meaning; but they will seldom be inclined to take up his work a second time.

Authors sometimes plead the difficulty of their subject, as an excuse for the want of Perspicuity. But the excuse can rarely, if ever, be admitted. For whatever a man conceives clearly, that it is in his power, if he will be at the trouble, to put into distinct propositions, or to express clearly to others: and upon no subject ought any man to write, where he cannot think clearly. His ideas, indeed, may, very excusably, be on some subjects incomplete or inadequate; but still, as far as they go, they ought to be clear; and, wherever this is the case, Perspicuity in expressing them is always attainable. The obscurity which reigns so much among many metaphysical writers, is, for the most part, owing to the indistinctness of their own conceptions. They see the object but in a confused light; and, of course, can never exhibit it in a clear one to others.

Perspicuity in writing, is not to be considered as merely a sort of negative virtue, or freedom from defect. It has higher merit: it is a degree of positive beauty. We are pleased with an author, we consider him as deserving praise, who frees us from all fatigue of searching for his meaning; who carries us through his subject without any embarrassment or confusion; whose style flows always like a limpid stream, where we see to the very bottom. *Ibid.*

§ 6. ON PURITY and PROPRIETY.

Purity and Propriety of Language, are often used indiscriminately for each other; and, indeed, they are very nearly allied. A distinction, however, obtains between them. Purity, is the use of such words, and such constructions, as belong to the idiom of the Language which we speak; in opposition to words and phrases that are imported from other Languages, or that are obsolete, or new-comed, or used without proper authority. Propriety is the selection of such words in the Language, as the best and most established usage has appropriated to those ideas which we intend to express by them. It implies the correct and happy application of them, according to that usage, in opposition to vulgarisms, or low expressions; and to words

and phrases, which would be less significant of the ideas that we mean to convey. Style may be pure, that is, it may all be strictly English, without Scotticisms or Gallicisms, or ungrammatical, irregular expressions of any kind, and may, nevertheless, be deficient in propriety. The words may be ill-chosen; not adapted to the subject, nor fully expressive of the author's sense. He has taken all his words and phrases from the general mass of English Language; but he has made his selection among these words unhappily. Whereas Style cannot be proper without being also pure; and where both Purity and Propriety meet, besides making Style perspicuous, they also render it graceful. There is no standard, either of Purity or of Propriety, but the practice of the best writers and speakers in the country.

When I mentioned obsolete or new-coined words as incongruous with Purity of Style, it will be easily understood, that some exceptions are to be made. On certain occasions, they may have grace. Poetry admits of greater latitude than prose, with respect to coining, or, at least, new-compounding words; yet, even here, this liberty should be used with a sparing hand. In prose, such innovations are more hazardous, and have a worse effect. They are apt to give Style an affected and conceited air; and should never be ventured upon except by such, whose established reputation gives them some degree of dictatorial power over Language.

The introduction of foreign and learned words, unless where necessity requires them, should always be avoided. Barren Languages may need such assistances; but ours is not one of these. Dean Swift, one of our most correct writers, valued himself much on using no words but such as were of native growth: and his Language, may, indeed, be considered as a standard of the strictest Purity and Propriety in the choice of words. At present, we seem to be departing from this standard. A multitude of Latin words have, of late, been poured in upon us. On some occasions, they give an appearance of elevation and dignity to Style. But often, also, they render it stiff and forced: and, in general, a plain native Style, as it is more intelligible to all readers, so, by a proper management of words, it may be made equally strong and expressive with this Latinized English. *Blair.*

§ 7. ON PRECISION.

The exact import of Precision may be drawn from the etymology of the word. It comes from "precidere," to cut off; it imports retrenching all superfluities, and pruning the expression so, as to exhibit neither more nor less than an exact copy of his idea who uses it. I observed before, that it is often difficult to separate the qualities of Style from the qualities of Thought; and it is found so in this instance. For in order to write with Precision, though this be properly a quality of Style, one must possess a very considerable degree of distinctness and accuracy in his manner of thinking.

The words, which a man uses to express his ideas, may be faulty in three respects; They may either not express that idea which the author intends, but some other which only resembles, or is a-kin to it; or, they may express that idea, but not quite fully and completely; or, they may express it together with something more than he intends. Precision stands opposed to all these three faults; but chiefly to the last. In an author's writing with propriety, his being free from the two former faults seems implied. The words which he uses are proper; that is, they express that idea which he intends, and they express it fully; but to be Precise, signifies, that they express that idea, and no more. There is nothing in his words which introduces any foreign idea, any superfluous, unseasonable accessory, so as to mix it confusedly with the principal object, and thereby to render our conception of that object loose and indistinct. This requires a writer to have, himself, a very clear apprehension of the object he means to present to us; to have laid fast hold of it in his mind; and never to waver in any one view he takes of it; a perfection to which, indeed, few writers attain. *Ibid.*

§ 8. On the Use and Importance of PRECISION.

The use and importance of Precision, may be deduced from the nature of the human mind. It never can view, clearly and distinctly, above one object at a time. If it must look at two or three together, especially objects among which there is resemblance or connection, it finds itself confused and embarrassed. It cannot clearly

clearly perceive in what they agree, and in what they differ. Thus were any object, suppose some animal, to be presented to me, of whose structure I wanted to form a distinct notion, I would desire all its trappings to be taken off, I would require it to be brought before me by itself, and to stand alone, that there might be nothing to distract my attention. The same is the case with words. If, when you would inform me of your meaning, you also tell me more than what conveys it; if you join foreign circumstances to the principal object; if, by unnecessarily varying the expression, you shift the point of view, and make me see sometimes the object itself, and sometimes another thing that is connected with it; you thereby oblige me to look on several objects at once, and I lose sight of the principal. You load the animal you are showing me with so many trappings and collars, and bring so many of the same species before me, somewhat resembling, and yet somewhat differing, that I see none of them clearly.

This forms what is called a Loose Style: and is the proper opposite to Precision. It generally arises from using a superfluity of words. Feeble writers employ a multitude of words, to make themselves understood, as they think, more distinctly; and they only confound the reader. They are sensible of not having caught the precise expression, to convey what they would signify; they do not, indeed, conceive their own meaning very precisely themselves; and, therefore, help it out, as they can, by this and the other word, which may, as they suppose, supply the defect, and bring you somewhat nearer to their idea: they are always going about it, and about it, but never just hit the thing. The image, as they set it before you, is always seen double; and no double image is distinct. When an author tells me of his hero's *courage* in the day of battle, the expression is precise, and I understand it fully. But if, from the desire of multiplying words, he will needs praise his *courage* and *fortitude*; at the moment he joins these words together, my idea begins to waver. He means to express one quality more strongly; but he is, in truth, expressing two. *Courage* resists danger; *fortitude* supports pain. The occasion of exerting each of these qualities is different; and being led to think of both together, when only one of them should be in my view, my view is rendered unsteady, and my conception of the object indistinct.

From what I have said, it appears that an author may, in a qualified sense, be perspicuous, while yet he is far from being precise. He uses proper words, and proper arrangement: he gives you the idea as clear as he conceives it himself; and so far he is perspicuous; but the ideas are not very clear in his own mind: they are loose and general; and, therefore, cannot be expressed with Precision. All subjects do not equally require Precision. It is sufficient on many occasions, that we have a general view of the meaning. The subject, perhaps, is of the known and familiar kind; and we are in no hazard of mistaking the sense of the author, though every word which he uses be not precise and exact. *Blair.*

§ 9. *The Causes of a Loose STYLE.*

The great source of a Loose Style, in opposition to Precision, is the injudicious use of those words termed Synonymous. They are called Synonymous, because they agree in expressing one principal idea: but, for the most part, if not always, they express it with some diversity in the circumstances. They are varied by some accessory idea which every word introduces, and which forms the distinction between them. Hardly, in any Language, are there two words that convey precisely the same idea; a person thoroughly conversant in the propriety of the Language, will always be able to observe something that distinguishes them. As they are like different shades of the same colour, an accurate writer can employ them to great advantage, by using them so as to heighten and finish the picture which he gives us. He supplies by one, what was wanting in the other, to the force, or to the lustre of the image which he means to exhibit. But in order to this end, he must be extremely attentive to the choice which he makes of them. For the bulk of writers are very apt to confound them with each other: and to employ them carelessly, merely for the sake of filling up a period, or of rounding and diversifying the Language, as if the signification were exactly the same, while, in truth, it is not. Hence a certain mist, and indistinctness, is unwarily thrown over Style. *Ibid.*

§ 10. *On the general Characters of STYLE.*

That different subjects require to be treated of in different sorts of Style, is a position so obvious, that I shall not stay to illustrate it. Every one sees that Treatises of Philosophy, for instance, ought not to

be composed in the same Style with Orations. Every one sees also, that different parts of the same composition require a variation in the Style and manner. In a sermon, for instance, or any harangue, the application or peroration admits of more ornament, and requires more warmth, than the didactic part. But what I mean at present to remark is, that, amidst this variety, we still expect to find, in the compositions of any one man, some degree of uniformity or consistency with himself in manner; we expect to find some predominant character of Style impressed on all his writings, which shall be suited to, and shall mark, his particular genius, and turn of mind. The orations in Livy differ much in Style, as they ought to do, from the rest of his history. The same is the case with those in Tacitus. Yet both in Livy's orations, and in those of Tacitus, we are able clearly to trace the distinguishing manner of each historian: the magnificent fulness of the one, and the sententious conciseness of the other. The "Lettres Persanes," and "L'Esprit de Loix," are the works of the same author. They required very different composition surely, and accordingly they differ widely; yet still we see the same hand. Wherever there is real and native genius, it gives a determination to one kind of Style rather than another. Where nothing of this appears; where there is no marked nor peculiar character in the compositions of any author, we are apt to infer, not without reason, that he is a vulgar and trivial author, who writes from imitation, and not from the impulse of original genius. As the most celebrated painters are known by their hand, so the best and most original writers are known and distinguished, throughout all their works, by their Style and peculiar manner. This will be found to hold almost without exception. *Blair.*

§ 11. On the *Austere, the Florid, and the Middle* STYLE.

The ancient Critics attended to these general characters of Style which we are now to consider. Dionysius of Halicarnassus divides them into three kinds; and calls them, the *Austere*, the *Florid*, and the *Middle*. By the *Austere*, he means a Style distinguished for strength and firmness, with a neglect of smoothness and ornament: for examples of which, he gives Pindar and Æschylus among the Poets, and Thucydides among the Prose writers. By the *Florid*, he means, as the name in-

dicates, a Style ornamented, flowing, and sweet; resting more upon numbers and grace, than strength; he instances Hesiod, Sappho, Anacreon, Euripides, and principally Isocrates. The Middle kind is the just mean between these, and comprehends the beauties of both; in which class he places Homer and Sophocles among the Poets: in Prose, Herodotus, Demosthenes, Plato, and (what seems strange) Aristotle. This must be a very wide class indeed, which comprehends Plato and Aristotle under one article as to Style*. Cicero and Quintilian make also a threefold division of Style, though with respect to different qualities of it; in which they are followed by most of the modern writers on Rhetoric; the *Simplex*, *Tenuis*, or *Subtile*; the *Gravi*, or *Vehemens*; and the *Medium*, or *temperatum genus dicendi*. But these divisions, and the illustrations they give of them, are so loose and general, that they cannot advance us much in our ideas of Style. I shall endeavour to be a little more particular in what I have to say on this subject. *Ibid.*

§ 12. On the *Concise* STYLE.

One of the first and most obvious distinctions of the different kinds of Style, is what arises from an author's spreading out his thoughts more or less. This distinction forms what are called the *Diffuse* and the *Concise* Styles. A concise writer compresses his thought into the fewest possible words; he seeks to employ none but such as are most expressive; he lops off, as redundant, every expression which does not add something material to the sense. Ornament he does not reject; he may be lively and figured; but his ornament is intended for the sake of force rather than grace. He never gives you the same thought twice. He places it in the light which appears to him the most striking; but if you do not apprehend it well in that light, you need not expect to find it in any other. His sentences are arranged with compactness and strength, rather than with cadence and harmony. The utmost precision is studied in them; and they are commonly designed to suggest more to the reader's imagination than they directly express. *Ibid.*

§ 13. On the *Diffuse* STYLE.

A diffuse writer unfolds his thought fully. He places it in a variety of lights,

* De Compositionibus Verborum, Cap. 25.

and gives the reader every possible assistance for understanding it completely. He is not very careful to express it at first in its full strength, because he is to repeat the impression; and what he wants in strength, he proposes to supply by copiousness. Writers of this character generally love magnificence and amplification. Their periods naturally run out into some length, and having room for ornament of every kind, they admit it freely.

Each of these manners has its peculiar advantages; and each becomes faulty when carried to the extreme. The extreme of conciseness becomes abrupt and obscure; it is apt also to lead into a Style too pointed, and bordering on the epigrammatic. The extreme of diffuseness becomes weak and languid, and tires the reader. However, to one or other of these two manners a writer may lean, according as his genius prompts him: and under the general character of a concise, or of a more open and diffuse Style, may possess much beauty in his composition.

For illustrations of these general characters, I can only refer to the writers who are examples of them. It is not so much from detached passages, such as I was wont formerly to quote for instances, as from the current of an author's Style, that we are to collect the idea of a formed manner of writing. The two most remarkable examples that I know, of conciseness carried as far as propriety will allow, perhaps in some cases farther, are Tacitus the Historian, and the President Montesquieu in "*L'Esprit de Loix*." Aristotle too holds an eminent rank among didactic writers for his brevity. Perhaps no writer in the world was ever so frugal of his words as Aristotle; but this frugality of expression frequently darkens his meaning. Of a beautiful and magnificent diffuseness, Cicero is, beyond doubt, the most illustrious instance that can be given. Addison, also, and Sir William Temple, come in some degree under this class.

Blair.

§ 14. On the Nervous and the Feeble STYLE.

The Nervous and the Feeble, are generally held to be characters of Style, of the same import with the Concise and the Diffuse. They do indeed very often coincide. Diffuse writers have, for the most part, some degree of feebleness; and nervous writers will generally be inclined to a con-

cise expression. This, however, does not always hold; and there are instances of writers, who, in the midst of a full and ample Style, have maintained a great degree of strength. Livy is an example; and in the English language, Dr. Barrow. Barrow's Style has many faults. It is unequal, incorrect, and redundant; but withal, for force and expressiveness uncommonly distinguished. On every subject, he multiplies words with an overflowing copiousness; but it is always a torrent of strong ideas and significant expressions which he pours forth. Indeed, the foundations of a nervous or a weak Style are laid in an author's manner of thinking. If he conceives an object strongly, he will express it with energy: but, if he has only an indistinct view of his subject; if his ideas be loose and wavering; if his genius be such, or, at the time of his writing, so carelessly exerted, that he has no firm hold of the conception which he would communicate to us; the marks of all this will clearly appear in his Style. Several unmeaning words and loose epithets will be found; his expressions will be vague and general; his arrangement indistinct and feeble; we shall conceive somewhat of his meaning, but our conception will be faint. Whereas a nervous writer, whether he employs an extended or a concise Style, gives us always a strong impression of his meaning; his mind is full of his subject, and his words are all expressive: every phrase and every figure which he uses, tends to render the picture, which he would set before us, more lively and complete.

Ibid.

§ 15. On Harshness of STYLE.

As every good quality in Style has an extreme, when pursued to which it becomes faulty, this holds of the Nervous Style as well as others. Too great a study of strength, to the neglect of the other qualities of Style, is found to betray writers into a harsh manner. Harshness arises from unusual words, from forced inversions in the construction of a sentence, and too much neglect of smoothness and ease. This is reckoned the fault of some of our earliest classics in the English Language; such as Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Francis Bacon, Hooker, Chillingworth, Milton in his prose works, Harrington, Cudworth, and other writers of considerable note in the days of Queen Elizabeth, James I. and Charles I. These writers had nerves and strength in a high degree, and

and are to this day eminent for that quality in Style. But the language in their hands was exceedingly different from what it is now, and was indeed entirely formed upon the idiom and construction of the Latin, in the arrangement of sentences. Hooker, for instance, begins the Preface to his celebrated work of Ecclesiastical Polity with the following sentence; "Though for no other cause, yet for this, that posterity may know we have not loosely, through silence, permitted things to pass away as in dream, there shall be, for men's information, extant this much, concerning the present state of the church of God established amongst us, and their careful endeavours which would have upheld the same." Such a sentence now sounds harsh in our ears. Yet some advantages certainly attended this sort of Style; and whether we have gained, or lost, upon the whole, by departing from it, may bear a question. By the freedom of arrangement, which it permitted, it rendered the language susceptible of more strength, of more variety of collocation, and more harmony of period. But however this be, such a Style is now obsolete; and no modern writer could adopt it without the censure of harshness and affectation. The present form which the Language has assumed, has, in some measure, sacrificed the study of strength to that of perspicuity and ease. Our arrangement of words has become less forcible, perhaps, but more plain and natural; and this is now understood to be the genius of our Language.

Blair.

§ 16. On the Dry Style.

The dry manner excludes all ornament of every kind. Content with being understood, it has not the least aim to please either the fancy or the ear. This is tolerable only in pure didactic writing; and even there, to make us bear it, great weight and solidity of matter is requisite; and entire perspicuity of language. Aristotle is the complete example of a Dry Style. Never, perhaps, was there any author who adhered so rigidly to the strictness of a didactic manner, throughout all his writings, and conveyed so much instruction, without the least approach to ornament. With the most profound genius, and extensive views, he writes like a pure intelligence, who addresses himself solely to the understanding, without making any use of the channel of the Imagination. But

this is a manner which deserves not to be imitated. For, although the goodness of the matter may compensate the dryness or harshness of the Style, yet is that dryness a considerable defect; as it fatigues attention, and conveys our sentiments, with disadvantage, to the reader or hearer.

Ibid.

§ 17. On the Plain Style.

A Plain Style rises one degree above a dry one. A writer of this character employs very little ornament of any kind, and rests almost entirely upon his sense. But, if he is at no pains to engage us by the employment of figures, musical arrangement, or any other art of writing, he studies, however, to avoid disgusting us, like a dry and a harsh writer. Besides Perspicuity, he pursues Propriety, Purity, and Precision, in his language: which form one degree, and no inconsiderable one, of beauty. Liveliness too, and force, may be consistent with a very Plain Style: and, therefore, such an author, if his sentiments be good, may be abundantly agreeable. The difference between a dry and plain writer, is, that the former is incapable of ornament, and seems not to know what it is; the latter seeks not after it. He gives us his meaning, in good language, distinct and pure; any further ornament he gives himself no trouble about; either, because he thinks it unnecessary to his subject; or, because his genius does not lead him to delight in it; or, because it leads him to despise it.

This last was the case with Dean Swift, who may be placed at the head of those that have employed the Plain Style. Few writers have discovered more capacity. He treats every subject which he handles, whether serious or ludicrous, in a masterly manner. He knew, almost beyond any man, the Purity, the Extent, the Precision of the English Language; and, therefore, to such as wish to attain a pure and correct Style, he is one of the most useful models. But we must not look for much ornament and grace in his Language.

• On this head, of the General Characters of Style, particularly the Plain and the Simple, and the characters of those English authors who are classed under them, in this, and the following Lectures [ix] several ideas have been taken from a manuscript treatise on rhetoric, part of which was shewn to me many years ago, by the learned and ingenious Author, Dr. Adam Smith, and which, it is hoped, will be given by him to the Public.

His

His haughty and morose genius made him despise any embellishment of this kind, as beneath his dignity. He delivers his sentiments in a plain, downright, positive manner, like one who is sure he is in the right; and is very indifferent whether you be pleased or not. His sentences are commonly negligently arranged; distinctly enough as to the sense, but without any regard to smoothness of sound; often without much regard to compactness or elegance. If a metaphor, or any other figure, chanced to render his satire more poignant, he would, perhaps, vouchsafe to adopt it, when it came in his way; but if it tended only to embellish and illustrate, he would rather throw it aside. Hence, in his serious pieces, his style often borders upon the dry and unpleasing; in his humorous ones, the plainness of his manner sets off his wit to the highest advantage. There is no froth nor affectation in it; it seems native and unstudied; and while he hardly appears to smile himself, he makes his reader laugh heartily. To a writer of such a genius as Dean Swift, the Plain Style was most admirably fitted. Among our philosophical writers, Mr. Locke comes under this class; perspicuous and pure, but almost without any ornament whatever. In works which admit, or require, ever so much ornament, there are parts where the plain manner ought to predominate. But we must remember, that when this is the character which a writer affects throughout his whole composition, great weight of matter, and great force of sentiment, are required, in order to keep up the reader's attention, and prevent him from becoming tired of the author. *Blair.*

§ 18. On the Neat Style.

What is called a Neat Style comes next in order; and here we are got into the region of ornament; but that ornament not of the highest or most sparkling kind. A writer of this character shews, that he does not despise the beauty of language. It is an object of his attention. But his attention is shewn in the choice of his words, and in a graceful collocation of them; rather than in any high efforts of imagination, or eloquence. His sentences are always clean, and free from the incumbrance of superfluous words; of a moderate length; rather inclining to brevity, than a swelling structure; closing with propriety; without any tails, or adjections dragging after the proper close. His

cadence is varied; but not of the studied musical kind. His figures, if he uses any, are short and correct; rather than bold and glowing. Such a Style as this may be attained by a writer who has no great powers of fancy or genius, by industry merely, and careful attention to the rules of writing; and it is a Style always agreeable. It imprints a character of moderate elevation on our composition, and carries a decent degree of ornament, which is not unsuitable to any subject whatever. A familiar letter, or a law paper, on the driest subject, may be written with neatness; and a sermon, or a philosophical treatise, in a Neat Style, will be read with pleasure.

Ibid.

§ 19. On an Elegant Style.

An Elegant Style is a character, expressing a higher degree of ornament than a neat one; and, indeed, is the term usually applied to Style, when possessing all the virtues of ornament, without any of its excesses or defects. From what has been formerly delivered, it will easily be understood, that complete Elegance implies great perspicuity and propriety; purity in the choice of words, and care and dexterity in their harmonious and happy arrangement. It implies farther, the grace and beauty of imagination spread over Style, as far as the subject admits it; and all the illustration which figurative language adds, when properly employed. In a word, an elegant writer is one who pleases the fancy and the ear, while he informs the understanding; and who gives us his ideas clothed with all the beauty of expression, but not overcharged with any of its misplaced finery. In this class, therefore, we place only the first rate writers in the language; such as Addison, Dryden, Pope, Temple, Bolingbroke, Atterbury, and a few more; writers who differ widely from one another in many of the attributes of Style, but whom we now class together, under the denomination of Elegant, as, in the scale of Ornament, possessing nearly the same place. *Ibid.*

§ 20. On the Florid Style.

When the ornaments, applied to Style, are too rich and gaudy in proportion to the subject; when they return upon us too fast, and strike us either with a dazzling lustre, or a false brilliancy, this form what is called a Florid Style; a term commonly used to signify the excess of ornament.

Ibid.

In a young composer this is very pardonable. Perhaps, it is even a promising symptom, in young people, that their Style should incline to the Florid and Luxuriant: "Volo se efferat in adolescente facunditas," says Quintilian, "multum inde decoquent anni, multum ratio limabit, aliquid velut usu ipso deteretur; fit modo unde excidi possit quid et exculpi." "Audeat hæc ætas plura, et inveniat et inventis gaudeat; sinit licet illa non satis interim sicca et severa. Facile remedium est ubertatis: sterilia nullo labore vincuntur." But, although the Florid Style may be allowed to youth, in their first essays, it must not receive the same indulgence from writers of maturer years. It is to be expected, that judgment, as it ripens, should chasten imagination; and reject, as juvenile, all such ornaments as are redundant, unsuitable to the subject, or not conducive to illustrate it. Nothing can be more contemptible than that tinsel splendour of language, which some writers perpetually affect. It were well, if this could be ascribed to the real overflowing of a rich imagination. We should then have something to amuse us, at least, if we found little to instruct us. But the worst is, that with those frothy writers, it is a luxuriance of words, not of fancy. We see a labouring attempt to rise to a splendour of composition, of which they have formed to themselves some loose idea; but having no strength of genius for attaining it, they endeavour to supply the defect by poetical words, by cold exclamations, by commonplace figures, and every thing that has the appearance of pomp and magnificence. It has escaped these writers, that sobriety in ornament, is one great secret for rendering it pleasing: and that without a foundation of good sense and solid thought, the most Florid Style is but a childish imposition on the Public. The Public, however, are but too apt to be so imposed on; at least, the mob of readers; who are very ready to be caught, at first, with whatever is dazzling and gaudy.

I cannot help thinking, that it reflects

"In youth, I wish to see luxuriancy of fancy appear. Much of it will be diminished by years; much will be corrected by ripening judgment; some of it, by the mere practice of composition, will be worn away. Let there be only sufficient matter, at first, that can bear some pruning and lopping off. At this time of life, let genius be bold and inventive, and pride itself in its efforts, though these should not, as yet, be correct. Luxuriancy can easily be cured; but for barrenness there is no remedy."

more honour on the religious turn, and good dispositions of the present age, than on the public taste, that Mr. Hervey's Meditations have had so great a currency. The pious and benevolent heart, which is always displayed in them, and the lively fancy which, on some occasions, appears, justly merited applause: but the perpetual glitter of expression, the swollen imagery, and strained description which abound in them, are ornaments of a false kind. I would, therefore, advise students of oratory to imitate Mr. Hervey's piety, rather than his Style; and, in all compositions of a serious kind, to turn their attention, as Mr. Pope says, "from sounds to things, from fancy to the heart." Admonitions of this kind I have already had occasion to give, and may hereafter repeat them; as I conceive nothing more incumbent on me, in this course of Lectures, than to take every opportunity of cautioning my readers against the affected and frivolous use of ornament; and, instead of that slight and superficial taste in writing, which I apprehend to be at present too fashionable, to introduce, as far as my endeavours can avail, a taste for more solid thought, and more manly simplicity in Style. Blair.

§ 21. On the different Kinds of SIMPLICITY.

The first is, Simplicity of Composition, as opposed to too great a variety of parts. Horace's precept refers to this:

Denique sit quod vis simplex duntaxat et unum.

This is the simplicity of plan in a tragedy, as distinguished from double plots, and crowded incidents; the Simplicity of the Iliad, or Æneid, in opposition to the digressions of Lucan, and the scattered tales of Ariosto; the Simplicity of Grecian architecture, in opposition to the irregular variety of the Gothic. In this sense, Simplicity is the same with Unity.

The second sense is, Simplicity of Thought, as opposed to refinement. Simple thoughts are what arise naturally; what the occasion or the subject suggest unfought; and what, when once suggested, are easily apprehended by all. Refinement in writing, expresses a less natural and obvious train of thought, and which it required a peculiar turn of genius

"Then learn the wand'ring humour to control,

"And keep one equal tenour through the whole."

FRANCIS.

to pursue; within certain bounds very beautiful; but when carried too far, approaching to intricacy, and hurting us by the appearance of being *recherché*, or far sought. Thus, we would naturally say, that Mr. Parnell is a poet of far greater simplicity, in his turn of thought, than Mr. Cowley: Cicero's thoughts on moral subjects are natural; Seneca's too refined and laboured. In these two senses of Simplicity, when it is opposed either to variety of parts, or to refinement of thought, it has no proper relation to Style.

There is a third sense of Simplicity, in which it has respect to Style; and stands opposed to too much ornament, or pomp of language; as when we say, Mr. Locke is a simple, Mr. Hervey, a florid writer; and it is in this sense, that the "*simplex*," the "*tenue*," or "*subtile genus dicendi*," is understood by Cicero and Quintilian. The simple style, in this sense, coincides with the plain or the neat style, which I before mentioned; and, therefore, requires no farther illustration.

But there is a fourth sense of Simplicity, also respecting Style; but not respecting the degree of ornament employed, so much as the easy and natural manner in which our language expresses our thoughts. This is quite different from the former sense of the word just now mentioned, in which Simplicity was equivalent to Plainness: whereas, in this sense, it is compatible with the highest ornament. Homer, for instance, possesses this Simplicity in the greatest perfection; and yet no writer has more ornament and beauty. This Simplicity, which is what we are now to consider, stands opposed, not to ornament, but to affectation of ornament, or appearance of labour about our Style; and it is a distinguishing excellency in writing.

Blair.

§ 22. SIMPLICITY appears easy.

A writer of Simplicity expresses himself in such a manner, that every one thinks he could have written in the same way; Horace describes it,

ut sibi quisvis
Speret idem, fudet multum, frustra que laboret
Aulus idem.

* "From well-known tales such actions would I raise,

"As all might hope to imitate with ease;

"Yet, while they strive the same success to gain;

"Should find their labours and their hopes in vain."

FRANCIS

There are no marks of art in his expression; it seems the very language of nature; you see, in the Style, not the writer and his labour, but the man, in his own natural character. He may be rich in his expression; he may be full of figures, and of fancy; but these flow from him without effort; and he appears to write in this manner, not because he has studied it, but because it is the manner of expression most natural to him. A certain degree of negligence, also, is not inconsistent with this character of style, and even not ungraceful in it; for too minute an attention to words is foreign to it: "*Habeat ille*," says Cicero, (Orat. No. 77.) *molle quiddam, et quod indicet non ingratam negligentiam hominis, de re magis quam de verbo laborantis*†. This is the great advantage of Simplicity of Style, that, like simplicity of manners, it shows us a man's sentiments and turn of mind laid open without disguise. More studied and artificial manners of writing, however beautiful, have always this disadvantage, that they exhibit an author in form, like a man at court, where the splendour of dress, and the ceremonial of behaviour, conceal those peculiarities which distinguish one man from another. But reading an author of Simplicity, is like conversing with a person of distinction at home, and with ease, where we find natural manners, and a marked character.

Ibid.

§ 23. On *Nâiveté*.

The highest degree of this Simplicity, is expressed by a French term to which we have none that fully answers in our language, *Nâiveté*. It is not easy to give a precise idea of the import of this word. It always expresses a discovery of character. I believe the best account of it is given by a French critic, M. Marmontel, who explains it thus: That sort of amiable ingenuity, or undisguised openness, which seems to give us some degree of superiority over the person who shews it; a certain infantine Simplicity, which we love in our hearts, but which displays some features of the character that we think we could have art enough to hide; and which, therefore, always leads us to smile at the person who

† "Let this Style have a certain softness and ease, which shall characterise a negligence, not unpleasant in an author who appears to be more solicitous about the thought than the expression."

discovers

discovers this character. La Fontaine, in his Fables, is given as the great example of such *Nai-veté*. This, however, is to be understood, as descriptive of a particular species only of Simplicity. *Blair.*

§ 24. *Ancients eminent for Simplicity.*

With respect to Simplicity, in general, we may remark, that the ancient original writers are always the most eminent for it. This happens from a plain reason, that they wrote from the dictates of natural genius, and were not formed upon the labours and writings of others, which is always in hazard of producing affectation. Hence, among the Greek writers, we have more models of a beautiful Simplicity than among the Roman. Homer, Hesiod, Anacreon, Theocritus, Herodotus, and Xenophon, are all distinguished for it. Among the Romans, also, we have some writers of this character; particularly Terence, Lucretius, Phædrus, and Julius Cæsar. The following passage of Terence's *Andria*, is a beautiful instance of Simplicity of manner in description:

Fumus interitum
Procedit; sequimur; ad sepulchrum venimus;
In ignem imposta est; fletur; interea hæc foror
Quam dixi, ad flammam accessit imprudentibus
Satis cum periculo. Ibi tum exanimatus Pam-
philus.
Bene dissimulatum amorem, & celatum indicat;
Occurrit præcept, mulierum ab igne retrahit,
Mea Glycerium, inquit, quid agis? Cur te is per-
ditum?
Tum illa, ut consuetum facile amorem cerneret,
Rejecit se in eum, sicens quam familiariter *.

ACT. I. SC. I.

All the words here are remarkably happy and elegant: and convey a most lively picture of the scene described; while, at the same time, the Style appears wholly artless

* "Meanwhile the funeral proceeds; we follow;
" low;

" Come to the sepulchre: the body's plac'd

" Upon the pile; lamented; whereupon

" This sister I was speaking of, all wild,

" Ran to the flames with peril of her life.

" There! there! the frighted Pamphilus be-
" trays

" His well-dissembled and long-hidden love;

" Runs up, and takes her round the waist, and
" cries,

" Oh! my Glycerium! what is it you do?

" Why, why endeavour to destroy yourself?

" Then she, in such a manner that you thence

" Might easily perceive their long, long love,

" Threw herself back into his arms, and wept.

" Oh! how familiarly!" *COLMAN.*

and unlaboured. Let us next consider some English writers, who come under this class. *Ibid.*

§ 25. *Simplicity the Characteristic of Tillotson's Style.*

Simplicity is the great beauty of Archbishop Tillotson's manner. Tillotson has long been admired as an eloquent writer, and a model for preaching. But his eloquence, if we can call it such, has been often misunderstood. For if we include in the idea of eloquence, vehemence and strength, picturesque description, glowing figures, or correct arrangement of sentences, in all these parts of oratory the Archbishop is exceedingly deficient. His Style is always pure, indeed, and perspicuous, but careless and remiss, too often feeble and languid; little beauty in the construction of his sentences, which are frequently suffered to drag unharmoniously; seldom any attempt towards strength or sublimity. But, notwithstanding these defects, such a constant vein of good sense and piety runs through his works, such an earnest and serious manner, and so much useful instruction, conveyed in a Style so pure, natural, and unaffected, as will justly recommend him to high regard, as long as the English language remains; not, indeed, as a model of the highest eloquence, but as a simple and amiable writer, whose manner is strongly expressive of great goodness and worth. I observed before, that Simplicity of manner may be consistent with some degree of negligence in Style; and it is only the beauty of that Simplicity which makes the negligence of such writers seem graceful. But, as appears in the Archbishop, negligence may sometimes be carried so far as to impair the beauty of Simplicity, and make it border on a flat and languid manner. *Ibid.*

§ 26. *Simplicity of Sir William Temple's Style.*

Sir William Temple is another remarkable writer in the Style of Simplicity. In point of ornament and correctness, he rises a degree above Tillotson; though, for correctness, he is not in the highest rank. All is easy and flowing in him; he is exceedingly harmonious; smoothness, and what may be called amenity, are the distinguishing characters of his manner; relaxing, sometimes, as such a manner will naturally do, into a prolix and remiss Style. No writer whatever has stamped upon his Style
a more

a more lively impression of his own character. In reading his works, we seem engaged in conversation with him; we become thoroughly acquainted with him, not merely as an author, but as a man; and contract a friendship for him. He may be classed as standing in the middle, between a negligent Simplicity and the highest degree of Ornament which this character of Style admits.

Blair.

§ 27. *Simplicity of Mr. Addison's Style.*

Of the latter of these, the highest, most correct, and ornamented degree of the simple manner, Mr. Addison is beyond doubt, in the English language, the most perfect example: and therefore, though not without some faults, he is, on the whole, the safest model for imitation, and the freest from considerable defects, which the language affords. Perspicuous and pure he is in the highest degree; his precision, indeed, not very great; yet nearly as great as the subjects which he treats of require: the construction of his sentences easy, agreeable, and commonly very musical; carrying a character of smoothness, more than of strength. In figurative language he is rich, particularly in similes and metaphors; which are so employed, as to render his Style splendid without being gaudy. There is not the least affectation in his manner; we see no marks of labour; nothing forced or constrained; but great elegance joined with great ease and simplicity. He is, in particular, distinguished by a character of modesty and of politeness, which appears in all his writings. No author has a more popular and insinuating manner; and the great regard which he every where shews for virtue and religion, recommends him highly. If he fails in any thing, it is in want of strength and precision, which renders his manner, though perfectly suited to such essays as he writes in the *Spectator*, not altogether a proper model for any of the higher and more elaborate kinds of composition. Though the public have ever done much justice to his merit, yet the nature of his merit has not always been seen in its true light: for, though his poetry be elegant, he certainly bears a higher rank among the prose writers, than he is entitled to among the poets; and, in prose, his humour is of a much higher and more original strain than his philosophy. The character of Sir Roger

de Coverley discovers more genius than the critique on Milton.

Ibid.

§ 28. *Simplicity of Style never wearies.*

Such authors as those, whose characters I have been giving, one never tires of reading. There is nothing in their manner that strains or fatigues our thoughts: we are pleased, without being dazzled by their lustre. So powerful is the charm of Simplicity in an author of real genius, that it atones for many defects, and reconciles us to many a careless expression. Hence, in all the most excellent authors, both in prose and verse, the simple and natural manner may be always remarked; although, other beauties being predominant, this forms not their peculiar and distinguishing character. Thus Milton is simple in the midst of all his grandeur; and Demosthenes in the midst of all his vehemence. To grave and solemn writings, Simplicity of manner adds the more venerable air. Accordingly, this has often been remarked as the prevailing character throughout all the sacred Scriptures: and indeed no other character of Style was so much suited to the dignity of inspiration.

Ibid.

§ 29. *Lord Shaftsbury deficient in Simplicity of Style.*

Of authors who, notwithstanding many excellencies, have rendered their Style much less beautiful by want of Simplicity, I cannot give a more remarkable example than Lord Shaftsbury. This is an author on whom I have made observations several times before; and shall now take leave of him, with giving his general character under this head. Considerable merit, doubtless, he has. His works might be read with profit for the moral philosophy which they contain, had he not filled them with so many oblique and invidious insinuations against the Christian Religion; thrown out, too, with so much spleen and satire, as do no honour to his memory, either as an author or a man. His language has many beauties. It is firm and supported in an uncommon degree: it is rich and musical. No English author, as I formerly shewed, has attended so much to the regular construction of his sentences, both with respect to propriety, and with respect to cadence. All this gives so much elegance and pomp to his language, that there is no wonder it should have been sometimes highly admired. It is greatly hurt, however, by perpetual

petual stiffness and affectation. This is its capital fault. His lordship can express nothing with Simplicity. He seems to have considered it as vulgar, and beneath the dignity of a man of quality to speak like other men. Hence he is ever in buskins; full of circumlocutions and artificial elegance. In every sentence, we see the marks of labour and art; nothing of that ease which expresses a sentiment coming natural and warm from the heart. Of figures and ornament of every kind, he is exceedingly fond; sometimes happy in them; but his fondness for them is too visible; and having once laid hold of some metaphor or allusion that pleased him, he knows not how to part with it. What is most wonderful, he was a professed admirer of Simplicity; is always extolling it in the ancients, and censuring the moderns for the want of it; though he departs from it himself as far as any one modern whatever. Lord Shaftsbury possessed delicacy and refinement of taste, to a degree that we may call excessive and sickly; but he had little warmth of passion; few strong or vigorous feelings; and the coldness of his character led him to that artificial and stately manner which appears in his writings. He was fonder of nothing than of wit and raillery; but he is far from being happy in it. He attempts it often, but always awkwardly; he is stiff, even in his pleasantry; and laughs in form, like an author, and not like a man *.

From the account which I have given of Lord Shaftsbury's manner, it may easily be imagined, that he would mislead many who blindly admired him. Nothing is more dangerous to the tribe of imitators, than an author, who with many imposing beauties, has also some very considerable blemishes. This is fully exemplified in Mr. Blackwall of Aberdeen, the author of the *Life of Homer*, the *Letters on Mythology*, and the *Court of Augustus*; a writer of considerable learning, and of ingenuity also; but infected with an extravagant love of an artificial Style, and of that parade of

* It may, perhaps, be not unworthy of being mentioned, that the first edition of his *Enquiry into Virtue* was published, surreptitiously I believe, in a separate form, in the year 1699; and is sometimes to be met with: by comparing which with the corrected edition of the same treatise, as it now stands among his works, we see one of the most curious and useful examples, that I know, of what is called *Living Labor*; the art of polishing language, breaking long sentences, and working up an imperfect draught into a highly-finished performance.

language which distinguishes the Shaftsburyan manner.

Having now said so much to recommend Simplicity, or the easy and natural manner of writing, and having pointed out the defects of an opposite manner; in order to prevent mistakes on this subject, it is necessary for me to observe, that it is very possible for an author to write simply, and yet not beautifully. One may be free from affectation, and not have merit. The beautiful Simplicity supposes an author to possess real genius; to write with solidity, purity, and liveliness of imagination. In this case, the simplicity or unaffectedness of his manner, is the crowning ornament; it heightens every other beauty; it is the dress of nature, without which all beauties are imperfect. But if mere unaffectedness were sufficient to constitute the beauty of Style, weak, trifling, and dull writers might often lay claim to this beauty. And accordingly we frequently meet with pretended critics, who extol the dullest writers on account of what they call the "Chaste Simplicity of their manner;" which, in truth, is no other than the absence of every ornament, through the mere want of genius and imagination. We must distinguish, therefore, between that Simplicity which accompanies true genius, and which is perfectly compatible with every proper ornament of Style; and that which is no other than a careless and slovenly manner. Indeed the distinction is easily made from the effect produced. The one never fails to interest the reader; the other is insipid and tiresome.

Blair.

§ 30. On the *Veherent* STYLE.

I proceed to mention one other manner or character of Style, different from any that I have yet spoken of; which may be distinguished by the name of the *Veherent*. This always implies strength; and is not, by any means, inconsistent with Simplicity: but, in its predominant character, is distinguishable from either the strong or the simple manner. It has a peculiar ardour; it is a glowing Style; the language of a man, whose imagination and passions are heated, and strongly affected by what he writes; who is therefore negligent of lesser graces, but pours himself forth with the rapidity and fulness of a torrent. It belongs to the higher kinds of oratory; and indeed is rather expected from a man who is speaking, than from one who is writing in his closet. The ora-

tions

tions of Demosthenes furnish the full and perfect example of this species of Style.

Blair.

§ 31. *Lord BOLINGBROKE excelled in the Vehement Style.*

Among English writers, the one who has most of this character, though mixed, indeed, with several defects, is Lord Bolingbroke. Bolingbroke was formed by nature to be a factious leader; the demagogue of a popular assembly. Accordingly, the Style that runs through all his political writings, is that of one declaiming with heat, rather than writing with deliberation. He abounds in rhetorical figures; and pours himself forth with great impetuosity. He is copious to a fault; places the same thought before us in many different views; but generally with life and ardour. He is bold, rather than correct; a torrent that flows strong, but often muddy. His sentences are varied as to length and shortness; inclining, however, most to long periods, sometimes including parentheses, and frequently crowding and heaping a multitude of things upon one another, as naturally happens in the warmth of speaking. In the choice of his words, there is great felicity and precision. In exact construction of sentences, he is much inferior to Lord Shaftsbury; but greatly superior to him in life and ease. Upon the whole, his merit, as a writer, would have been very considerable, if his matter had equalled his Style. But whilst we find many things to commend in the latter, in the former, as I before remarked, we can hardly find any thing to commend. In his reasonings, for the most part, he is flimsy and false; in his political writings, factious: in what he calls his philosophical ones, irreligious and sophistical in the highest degree.

Ibid.

§ 32. *Directions for forming a STYLE.*

It will be more to the purpose, that I conclude these dissertations upon Style with a few directions concerning the proper method of attaining a good Style in general; leaving the particular character of that Style to be either formed by the subject on which we write, or prompted by the bent of genius.

The first direction which I give for this purpose, is, to study clear ideas on the subject concerning which we are to write or speak. This is a direction which may at first appear to have small relation to Style,

Its relation to it, however, is extremely close. The foundation of all good Style, is good sense, accompanied with a lively imagination. The Style and thoughts of a writer are so intimately connected, that, as I have several times hinted, it is frequently hard to distinguish them. Wherever the impressions of things upon our minds are faint and indistinct, or perplexed and confused, our Style in treating of such things will infallibly be so too. Whereas, what we conceive clearly and feel strongly, we will naturally express with clearness and with strength. This, then, we may be assured, is a capital rule as to Style, to think closely of the subject, till we have attained a full and distinct view of the matter which we are to clothe in words, till we become warm and interested in it; then, and not till then, shall we find expression begin to flow. Generally speaking, the best and most proper expressions, are those which a clear view of the Subject suggests, without much labour or enquiry after them. This is Quintilian's observation, Lib. viii. c. 1. "Plerumque optima verba rebus coherent, et cernuntur suo lumine. At nos quæ rimus illa, tantum quam lateant seque subducant. Ita nunquam putamus verba esse circa id de quo dicendum est; sed ex aliis locis peragimus, et invenis vim asserimus."

Ibid.

§ 33. *Practice necessary for forming a STYLE.*

In the second place, in order to form a good Style, the frequent practice of composing is indispensibly necessary. Many rules concerning Style I have delivered; but no rules will answer the end without exercise and habit. At the same time, it is not every sort of composing that will improve Style. This is so far from being the case, that by frequent, careless and hasty composition, we shall acquire certainly a very bad Style; we shall have more trouble afterwards in unlearning faults, and correcting negligences, than if we had not been accustomed to composition at all. In the beginning, therefore,

"The most proper words for the most part adhere to the thoughts which are to be expressed by them, and may be discovered as by their own light. But we hunt after them, as if they were hidden, and only to be found in a corner. Hence, instead of conceiving the words to lie near the subject, we go in quest of them to some other quarter, and endeavour to give force to the expressions we have found out."

we ought to write slowly and with much care. Let the facility and speed of writing, be the fruit of longer practice. "Moram et sollicitudinem," says Quinctilian with the greatest reason, L. x. c. 3. "initium impero. Nam primum hoc constituendum ac obtinendum est, ut quam optime scribamus; celeritatem dabit consuetudo. Paulatim res facilius se ostendunt, verba respondent, compositio prosequetur. Cuncta denique et in familia bene instituta in officio erunt. Summa hæc est rei: citò scribendo non fit ut bene scribatur; bene scribendo, fit ut citò." Blair.

§ 34. *Too anxious a Care about Words to be avoided.*

We must observe, however, that there may be an extreme in too great and anxious a care about Words. We must not retard the course of thought, nor cool the heat of imagination, by pausing too long on every word we employ. There is, on certain occasions, a glow of composition which should be kept up, if we hope to express ourselves happily, though at the expence of allowing some inadvertencies to pass. A more severe examination of these must be left to be the work of correction. For if the practice of composition be useful, the laborious work of correcting is no less so; it is indeed absolutely necessary to our reaping any benefit from the habit of composition. What we have written should be laid by for some little time, till the ardour of composition be past, till the fondness for the expressions we have used be worn off, and the expressions themselves be forgotten; and then reviewing our work with a cool and critical eye, as if it were the performance of another, we shall discern many imperfections which at first escaped us. Then is the season for pruning redundancies; for weighing the arrangement of sentences; for attending to the juncture and connecting particles; and bringing Style into a regular, correct, and supported form. This "*Lima Liber*" must be submitted to by all who would

"I enjoin that such as are beginning the practice of composition, write slowly, and with anxious deliberation. Their great object at first should be, to write as well as possible; practice will enable them to write speedily. By degrees matter will offer itself still more readily; words will be at hand; composition will flow; every thing, as in the arrangement of a well-ordered family, will present itself in its proper place. The sum of the whole is this; by hasty composition, we shall never acquire the art of composing well; by writing well, we shall come to write speedily."

communicate their thoughts with proper advantage to others; and some practice in it will soon sharpen their eye to the most necessary objects of attention, and render it a much more easy and practicable work than might at first be imagined. *Ibid.*

§ 35. *An Acquaintance with the best Authors necessary to the Formation of a Style.*

In the third place, with respect to the assistance that is to be gained from the writings of others, it is obvious that we ought to render ourselves well acquainted with the Style of the best authors. This is requisite, both in order to form a just taste in Style, and to supply us with a full stock of words on every subject. In reading authors with a view to Style, attention should be given to the peculiarities of their different manners; and in this and former Lectures I have endeavoured to suggest several things that may be useful in this view. I know no exercise that will be found more useful for acquiring a proper Style, than to translate some passage from an eminent English author, into our own words. What I mean is, to take, for instance, some page of one of Mr. Addison's Spectators, and read it carefully over two or three times, till we have got a firm hold of the thoughts contained in it; then to lay aside the book; to attempt to write out the passage from memory, in the best way we can; and having done so, next to open the book, and compare what we have written with the Style of the author. Such an exercise will, by comparison, shew us where the defects of our Style lie; will lead us to the proper attentions for rectifying them; and, among the different ways in which the same thought may be expressed, will make us perceive that which is the most beautiful. *Ibid.*

§ 36. *A servile Imitation to be avoided.*

In the fourth place, I must caution, at the same time, against a servile imitation of any one author whatever. This is always dangerous. It hampers genius; it is likely to produce a stiff manner; and those who are given to close imitation, generally imitate an author's faults as well as his beauties. No man will ever become a good writer, or speaker, who has not some degree of confidence to follow his own genius. We ought to beware, in particular, of adopting any author's noted phrases, or transcribing passages from him. Such

Such a habit will prove fatal to all genuine composition. Infinitely better it is to have something that is our own, though of moderate beauty, than to affect to shine in borrowed ornaments, which will, at last, betray the utter poverty of our genius. On these heads of composing, correcting, reading and imitating, I advise every student of oratory to consult what Quintilian has delivered in the Tenth Book of his Institutions, where he will find a variety of excellent observations and directions, that well deserve attention. *Blair.*

§ 37. *STYLE must be adapted to the Subject.*

In the fifth place, it is an obvious but material rule, with respect to Style, that we always study to adapt it to the subject, and also to the capacity of our hearers, if we are to speak in public. Nothing merits the name of eloquent or beautiful, which is not suited to the occasion, and to the persons to whom it is addressed. It is to the last degree awkward and absurd, to attempt a poetical florid Style, on occasions when it should be our business only to argue and reason; or to speak with elaborate pomp of expression, before persons who comprehend nothing of it, and who can only stare at our unseasonable magnificence. These are defects not so much in point of Style, as, what is much worse, in point of common sense. When we begin to write or speak, we ought previously to fix in our minds a clear conception of the end to be aimed at; to keep this steadily in our view, and to suit our Style to it. If we do not sacrifice to this great object every ill-timed ornament that may occur to our fancy, we are unpardonable; and though children and fools may admire, men of sense will laugh at us and our Style. *Ibid.*

§ 38. *Attention to STYLE must not detract from Attention to THOUGHT.*

In the last place, I cannot conclude the subject without this admonition, that, in any case, and on any occasion, attention to Style must not engross us so much, as to detract from a higher degree of attention to the Thoughts. "*Curam verborum,*" says the great Roman Critic, "*rerum volo esse sollicitudinem*." A direction the more necessary, as the pre-

* To your expression be attentive; but about "your matter be solicitous."

sent taste of the age, in writing, seems to lean more to Style than to Thought. It is much easier to dress up trivial and common sentiments with some beauty of expression, than to afford a fund of vigorous, ingenious, and useful thoughts. The latter requires true genius; the former may be attained by industry, with the help of very superficial parts. Hence, we find so many writers frivolously rich in Style, but wretchedly poor in sentiment. The public ear is now so much accustomed to a correct and ornamented Style, that no writer can, with safety, neglect the study of it. But he is a contemptible one, who does not look to something beyond it; who does not lay the chief stress upon his matter, and employ such ornaments of Style to recommend it, as are manly, not foppish, "*Majore animo,*" says the writer whom I have so often quoted, "*aggredienda est eloquentia; quæ si toto corpore valet, ungues polire et capillum componere, non existimabit ad curam suam pertinere. Ornatus et virilis et fortis et sanctus sit; nec effeminatam levitatem et fucos ementium colorem amet; sanguine et viribus nitescat.*" *Ibid.*

§ 39. *Of the Rise of Poetry among the ROMANS.*

The Romans, in the infancy of their state, were entirely rude and unpolished. They came from shepherds; they were increased from the refuse of the nations around them; and their manners agreed with their original. As they lived wholly on tilling their ground at home, or on plunder from their neighbours, war was their business, and agriculture the chief art they followed. Long after this, when they had spread their conquests over a great part of Italy, and began to make a considerable figure in the world,—even their great men retained a roughness, which they raised into a virtue, by calling it Roman Spirit; and which might often much better have been called Roman Barbarity. It seems to me, that there was more of austerity than justice, and more of insolence than courage,

* "A higher spirit ought to animate those who study eloquence. They ought to consult the health and soundness of the whole body, rather than bend their attention to such trifling objects as paring the nails, and dressing the hair. Let ornament be manly and chaste, without effeminate pallery, or artificial colouring, let it shine with the glow of health and strength."

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in some of their most celebrated actions. However that be, this is certain, that they were at first a nation of soldiers and husbandmen: roughness was long an applauded character among them; and a sort of rusticity reigned, even in their senate-house.

In a nation originally of such a temper as this, taken up almost always in extending their territories, very often in settling the balance of power among themselves, and not unfrequently in both these at the same time, it was long before the politer arts made any appearance; and very long before they took root or flourished to any degree. Poetry was the first that did so; but such a poetry, as one might expect among a warlike, busied, unpolished people.

Not to enquire about the songs of triumph, mentioned even in Romulus's time, there was certainly something of poetry among them in the next reign under Numa: a prince, who pretended to converse with the Muses, as well as with Egeria; and who might possibly himself have made the verses which the Salian priests sung in his time. Pythagoras, either in the same reign, or if you please some time after, gave the Romans a tincture of poetry as well as of philosophy; for Cicero assures us, that the Pythagoreans made great use of poetry and music: and probably they, like our old Druids, delivered most of their precepts in verse. Indeed the chief employment of poetry, in that and the following ages, among the Romans, was of a religious kind. Their very prayers, and perhaps their whole liturgy, was poetical. They had also a sort of prophetic or sacred writers, who seem to have wrote generally in verse; and were so numerous, that there were above two thousand of their volumes remaining even to Augustus's time. They had a kind of plays too, in these early times, derived from what they had seen of the Tuscan actors, when sent for to Rome to expiate a plague that raged in the city. These seem to have been either like our dumb-shews, or else a kind of extempore farces; a thing to this day a good deal in use all over Italy, and in Tuscany. In a more particular manner add to these, that extempore kind of jesting dialogues begun at their harvest and vintage feasts; and carried on so rudely and abusively afterwards, as to occasion a very severe law to restrain their licentiousness—and those

lovers of poetry and good eating, who seem to have attended the tables of the richer sort, much like the old provincial poets, or our own British bards, and sang there, to some instrument of music, the achievements of their ancestors, and the noble deeds of those who had gone before them, to inflame others to follow their great examples.

The names of almost all these poets sleep in peace with all their works; and, if we may take the word of the other Roman writers of a better age, it is no great loss to us. One of their best poets represents them as very obscure and very contemptible; one of their best historians avoids quoting them, as too barbarous for politer ears; and one of their most judicious emperors ordered the greatest part of their writings to be burnt, that the world might be troubled with them no longer.

All these poets therefore may very well be dropt in the account: there being nothing remaining of their works: and probably no merit to be found in them, if they had remained. And so we may date the beginning of the Roman poetry from Livius Andronicus, the first of their poets of whom any thing does remain to us; and from whom the Romans themselves seem to have dated the beginning of their poetry, even in the Augustan age.

The first kind of poetry that was followed with any success among the Romans, was that for the stage. They were a very religious people; and stage plays in those times made no inconsiderable part in their public devotions; it is hence, perhaps, that the greatest number of their oldest poets, of whom we have any remains, and indeed almost all of them, are dramatic poets. *Spence.*

§ 40. OF LIVIUS, NÆVIUS, and ENNIUS.

The foremost in this list, were Livius, Nævius, and Ennius. Livius's first play (and it was the first written play that ever appeared at Rome, whence perhaps Horace calls him Livius Scriptor) was acted in the 514th year from the building of the city. He seems to have got whatever reputation he had, rather as their first, than as a good writer; for Cicero, who admired these old poets more than they were afterwards admired, is forced to give up Livius; and says, that his pieces did not deserve a second reading. He was for some time the sole writer for the stage; till Nævius rose to rival him, and probably

bly far exceeded his master. Nævius ventured too on an epic, or rather an historical poem, on the first Carthaginian war. Ennius followed his steps in this, as well as in the dramatic way; and seems to have excelled him as much as he had excelled Livius; so much at least, that Lucretius says of him, "That he was the first of their poets who deserved a lasting crown from the Muses." These three poets were actors as well as poets; and seem all of them to have wrote whatever was wanted for the stage, rather than to have consulted their own turn or genius. Each of them published, sometimes tragedies, sometimes comedies, and sometimes a kind of dramatic satires; such satires, I suppose, as had been occasioned by the extempore poetry that had been in fashion the century before them. All the most celebrated dramatic writers of antiquity excel only in one kind. There is no tragedy of Terence, or Menander; and no comedy of Aëtius, or Euripides. But these first dramatic poets, among the Romans, attempted every thing indifferently; just as the present fancy, or the demand of the people, led them:

The quiet the Romans enjoyed after the second Punic war, when they had humbled their great rival Carthage; and their carrying on their conquests afterwards, without any great difficulties, into Greece,—gave them leisure and opportunities for making very great improvements in their poetry. Their dramatic writers began to act with more steadiness and judgment; they followed one point of view: they had the benefit of the excellent patterns the Greek writers had set them; and formed themselves on those models. *Spence.*

§ 41. OF PLAUTUS.

Plautus was the first that consulted his own genius, and confined himself to that species of dramatic writing, for which he was the best fitted by nature. Indeed, his comedy (like the old comedy at Athens) is of a ruder kind, and far enough from the polish that was afterwards given it among the Romans. His jests are often rough, and his wit coarse; but there is a strength and spirit in him, that make one read him with pleasure; at least, he is much to be commended for being the first that considered what he was most capable of excelling in, and not endeavouring to shine in too many different ways at once. Cæcilius followed his example in this par-

ticular; but improved their comedy so much beyond him, that he is named by Cicero, as perhaps the best of all the comic writers they ever had. This high character of him was not for his language, which is given up by Cicero himself as faulty and incorrect; but either for the dignity of his characters, or the strength and weight of his sentiments. *Ibid.*

§ 42. OF TERENCE.

Terence made his first appearance when Cæcilius was in high reputation. It is said, that when he offered his first play to the Ediles, they sent him with it to Cæcilius for his judgment of the piece. Cæcilius was at supper when he came to him; and as Terence was dressed very meanly, he was placed on a little stool, and desired to read away; but upon his having read a very few lines only, Cæcilius altered his behaviour, and placed him next himself at the table. They all admired him as a rising genius; and the applause he received from the public, answered the compliments they had made him in private. His Eunuchus, in particular, was acted twice in one day; and he was paid more for that piece than ever had been given before for a comedy: and yet, by the way, it was not much above thirty pounds. We may see by that, and the rest of his plays which remain to us, to what a degree of exactness and elegance the Roman comedy was arrived in his time. There is a beautiful simplicity, which reigns through all his works. There is no searching after wit, and no ostentation of ornament in him. All his speakers seem to say just what they should say, and no more. The story is always going on; and goes on just as it ought. This whole age, long before Terence, and long after, is rather remarkable for strength than beauty in writing. Were we to compare it with the following age, the compositions of this would appear to those of the Augustan, as the Doric order in building if compared with the Corinthian; but Terence's work is to those of the Augustan age, as the Ionic is to the Corinthian order: it is not so ornamented, or so rich; but nothing can be more exact and pleasing. The Roman language itself, in his hands, seems to be improved beyond what one could ever expect; and to be advanced almost a hundred years forwarder than the times he lived in. There are some who look upon this as one of the strangest phenomena in the learned world: but it is a phenomenon

menon which may be well enough explained from Cicero. He says, "that in several families the Roman language was spoken in perfection, even in those times;" and instances particularly in the families of the Lælii and the Scipio's. Every one knows that Terence was extremely intimate in both these families: and as the language of his pieces is that of familiar conversation, he had indeed little more to do, than to write as they talked at their tables. Perhaps, too, he was obliged to Scipio and Lælius, for more than their bare conversations. That is not at all impossible; and indeed the Romans themselves seem generally to have imagined, that he was assisted by them in the writing part too. If it was really so, that will account still better for the elegance of the language in his plays: because Terence himself was born out of Italy: and though he was brought thither very young, he received the first part of his education in a family, where they might not speak with so much correctness as Lælius and Scipio had been used to from their very infancy. Thus much for the language of Terence's plays: as for the rest, it seems, from what he says himself, that his most usual method was to take his plans chiefly, and his characters wholly, from the Greek comic poets. Those who say that he translated all the comedies of Menander, certainly carry the matter too far. They were probably more than Terence ever wrote. Indeed this would be more likely to be true of Afranius than Terence; though I suppose, it would scarce hold, were we to take both of them together. *Spence.*

§ 43. OF AFRANIUS.

We have a very great loss in the works of Afranius: for he was regarded, even in the Augustan Age, as the most exact imitator of Menander. He owns himself, that he had no restraint in copying him; or any other of the Greek comic writers, wherever they set him a good example. Afranius's stories and persons were Roman, as Terence's were Grecian. This was looked upon as so material a point in those days, that it made two different species of comedy. Those on a Greek story were called, *Palliata*; and these on a Roman *Togata*. Terence excelled all the Roman poets in the former, and Afranius in the latter. *Ibid.*

§ 44. OF PACUVIUS and ACTIUS.

About the same time that comedy was improved so considerably, Pacuvius and Actius (one a contemporary of Terence, and the other of Afranius) carried tragedy as far towards perfection as it ever arrived in Roman hands. The step from Ennius to Pacuvius was a very great one; so great, that he was reckoned, in Cicero's time, the best of all their tragic poets. Pacuvius, as well as Terence, enjoyed the acquaintance and friendship of Lælius and Scipio: but he did not profit so much by it, as to the improvement of his language. Indeed his style was not to be the common conversation style, as Terence's was; and all the stiffenings given to it, might take just as much from its elegance as they added to its dignity. What is remarkable in him, is, that he was almost as eminent for painting as he was for poetry. He made the decorations for his own plays; and Pliny speaks of some paintings by him, in a temple of Hercules, as the most celebrated work of their kind, done by any Roman of condition after Fabius Pictor. Actius began to publish when Pacuvius was leaving off: his language was not so fine, nor his verses so well-turned, even as those of his predecessor. There is a remarkable story of him in an old critic, which, as it may give some light into their different manners of writing, may be worth relating. Pacuvius, in his old age, retired to Tarentum, to enjoy the soft air and mild winters of that place. As Actius was obliged, on some affairs, to make a journey into Asia, he took Tarentum in his way, and staid there some days with Pacuvius. It was in this visit that he read his tragedy of Atreus to him, and desired his opinion of it. Old Pacuvius, after hearing it out, told him very honestly, that the poetry was sonorous and majestic, but that it seemed to him too stiff and harsh. Actius replied, that he was himself very sensible of that fault in his writings; but that he was not at all sorry for it: "for," says he, "I have always been of opinion, that it is the same with writers as with fruits; among which those that are most soft and palatable, decay the soonest; whereas those of a rough taste last the longer, and have the finer relish, when once they come to be mellowed by time."—Whether this style ever came to be thus mellowed, I very much doubt; however that was, it is a point

point that seems generally allowed, that he and Pacuvius were the two best tragic poets the Romans ever had.

Spence.

§ 45. *Of the Rise of Satire: Of LUCILIUS, LUCRETIVS, and CATULLUS.*

All this while, that is, for above one hundred years, the stage, as you see, was almost solely in possession of the Roman poets. It was now time for the other kinds of poetry to have their turn; however, the first that sprung up and flourished to any degree, was still a cyon from the same root. What I mean, is Satire; the produce of the old comedy. This kind of poetry had been attempted in a different manner by some of the former writers, and in particular by Ennius: but it was so altered and so improved by Lucilius, that he was called the inventor of it. This was a kind of poetry wholly of the Roman growth; and the only one they had that was so; and even as to this, Lucilius improved a good deal by the side lights he borrowed from the old comedy at Athens. Not long after, Lucretius brought their poetry acquainted with philosophy: and Catullus began to shew the Romans something of the excellence of the Greek lyric poets. Lucretius discovers a great deal of spirit wherever his subject will give him leave; and the first moment he steps a little aside from it, in all his digressions, he is fuller of life and fire, and appears to have been of a more poetical turn, than Virgil himself; which is partly acknowledged in the fine compliment the latter seems to pay him in his *Georgics*. His subject often obliges him to go on heavily for an hundred lines together: but wherever he breaks out, he breaks out like lightning from a dark cloud; all at once, with force and brightness. His character, in this, agrees with what is said of him: that a philtre he took had given him a frenzy, and that he wrote in his lucid intervals. He and Catullus wrote, when letters in general began to flourish at Rome much more than ever they had done. Catullus was too wise to rival him; and was the most admired of all his contemporaries, in all the different ways of writing he attempted. His odes perhaps are the least valuable part of his works. The strokes of satire in his epigrams are very severe; and the descriptions in his *Idylls*, very full and picturesque. He paints strongly; but all his paintings have more of force

than elegance, and put one more in mind of Homer than Virgil.

With these I shall chuse to close the first age of the Roman poetry: an age more remarkable for strength than for refinement in writing. I have dwelt longer on it perhaps than I ought; but the order and succession of these poets wanted much to be settled: and I was obliged to say something of each of them, because I may have recourse to each on some occasion or another, in shewing you my collection. All that remains to us of the poetical works of this age, are the miscellaneous poems of Catullus; the philosophical poem of Lucretius; six comedies by Terence; and twenty by Plautus. Of all the rest, there is nothing left us, except such passages from their works as happened to be quoted by the ancient writers, and particularly by Cicero and the old critics.

Ibid.

§ 46. *Of the Criticisms of CICERO, HORACE, and QUINCTILIAN on the above Writers.*

The best way to settle the characters and merits of these poets of the first age, where so little of their own works remains, is by considering what is said of them by the other Roman writers, who were well acquainted with their works. The best of the Roman critics we can consult now, and perhaps the best they ever had, are Cicero, Horace, and Quinctilian. If we compare their sentiments of these poets together, we shall find a disagreement in them; but a disagreement which I think may be accounted for, without any great difficulty. Cicero, (as he lived before the Roman poetry was brought to perfection, and possibly as no very good judge of poetry himself) seems to think more highly of them than the others. He gives up Livius indeed; but then he makes it up in commending Nævius. All the other comic poets he quotes often with respect; and as to the tragic, he carries it so far as to seem strongly inclined to oppose old Ennius to Æchilius, Pacuvius to Sophocles, and Accius to Euripides.—This high notion of the old poets was probably the general fashion in his time; and it continued afterwards (especially among the more elderly sort of people) in the Augustan age; and indeed much longer. Horace, in his epistle to Augustus, combats it as a vulgar error in his time; and perhaps it was an error from which that prince himself was not

wholly free. However that be, Horace, on this occasion, enters into the question very fully, and with a good deal of warmth. The character he gives of the old dramatic poets (which indeed includes all the Poets I have been speaking of, except Lucilius, Lucretius, and Catullus), is perhaps rather too severe. He says, "That their language was in a great degree superannuated, even in his time; that they are often negligent and incorrect; and that there is generally a stiffness in their compositions: that people indeed might pardon these things in them, as the fault of the times they lived in; but that it was provoking they should think of commending them for those very faults." In another piece of his, which turns pretty much on the same subject, he gives Lucilius's character much in the same manner. He owns, "that he had a good deal of wit; but then it is rather of the farce kind, than true genteel wit. He is a rapid writer, and has a great many good things in him; but is often very superfluous and incorrect; his language is dashed affectedly with Greek; and his verses are hard and unharmonious."—Quintilian steers the middle way between both. Cicero perhaps was a little misled by his nearness to their times; and Horace by his subject, which was professedly to speak against the old writers. Quintilian, therefore, does not commend them so generally as Cicero, nor speak against them so strongly as Horace; and is perhaps more to be depended upon, in this case, than either of them. He compares the works of Ennius to some sacred grove, in which the old oaks look rather venerable than pleasing. He commends Patruvius and Actius, for the strength of their language and the force of their sentiments; but says, "they wanted that polish which was set on the Roman poetry afterwards." He speaks of Plautus and Cæcilius, as applauded writers: of Terence as a most elegant, and of Afranius, as an excellent one; but they all, says he, fall infinitely short of the grace and beauty which is to be found in the Attic writers of comedy, and which is perhaps peculiar to the dialect they wrote in. To conclude: According to him, Lucilius is too much cried up by many, and too much run down by Horace; Lucretius is more to be read for his matter than for his style; and Catullus is remarkable in the satirical part of his works, but scarce so in the rest of his lyric poetry.

§ 47. *Of the flourishing State of Poetry among the ROMANS.*

The first age was only as the dawning of the Roman poetry, in comparison of the clear full light that opened all at once afterwards, under Augustus Cæsar. The state which had been so long tending towards a monarchy, was quite settled down to that form by this prince. When he had no longer any dangerous opponents, he grew mild, or at least concealed the cruelty of his temper. He gave peace and quiet to the people that were fallen into his hands; and looked kindly on the improvement of all the arts and elegancies of life among them. He had a minister, too, under him, who (though a very bad writer himself) knew how to encourage the best; and who admitted the best poets, in particular, into a very great share of friendship and intimacy with him. Virgil was one of the foremost in this list; who, at his first setting out, grew soon their most applauded writer for genteel pastorals; then gave them the most beautiful and most correct poem that ever was wrote in the Roman language, in his rules of agriculture (so beautiful, that some of the ancients seem to accuse Virgil of having studied beauty too much in that piece); and last of all, undertook a political poem, in support of the new establishment. I have thought this to be the intent of the *Æneid*, ever since I first read Bossu; and the more one considers it, the more I think one is confirmed in that opinion. Virgil is said to have begun this poem the very year that Augustus was freed from his great rival Anthony: the government of the Roman empire was to be wholly in him: and though he chose to be called their father, he was, in every thing but the name, their king. This monarchical form of government must naturally be apt to displease the people. Virgil seems to have laid the plan of his poem to reconcile them to it. He takes advantage of their religious turn; and of some old prophecies that must have been very flattering to the Roman people, as promising them the empire of the whole world: he weaves this in with the most probable account of their origin, that of their being descended from the Trojans. To be a little more particular: Virgil, in his *Æneid*, shews that *Æneas* was called into their country by the express order of the gods; that he was made king of it, by the will of heaven, and

and by all the human rights that could be; that there was an uninterrupted succession of kings from him to Romulus; that his heirs were to reign there for ever; and that the Romans, under them, were to obtain the monarchy of the world. It appears from Virgil, and the other Roman writers, that Julius Cæsar was of the royal race, and that Augustus was his sole heir. The natural result of all this is, that the promises made to the Roman people, in and through this race, terminating in Augustus, the Romans if they would obey the gods, and be masters of the world, were to yield obedience to the new establishment under that prince. As odd a scheme as this may seem now, it is scarce so odd as that of some people among us, who persuaded themselves, that an absolute obedience was owing to our kings, on their supposed descent from some unknown patriarch: and yet that had its effects with many, about a century ago; and seems not to have quite lost all its influence, even in our remembrance. However that be, I think it appears plain enough, that the two great points aimed at by Virgil in his *Æneid*, were to maintain their old religious tenets, and to support the new form of government in the family of the Cæsars. That poem therefore may very well be considered as a religious and political work, or rather (as the vulgar religion with them was scarce any thing more than an engine of state) it may fairly enough be considered as a work merely political. If this was the case, Virgil was not so highly encouraged by Augustus and Mæcenas for nothing. To speak a little more plainly: He wrote in the service of the new usurpation on the state: and all that can be offered in vindication of him, in this light, is, that the usurper he wrote for, was grown a tame one; and that the temper and bent of their constitution, at that time, was such, that the reins of government must have fallen into the hands of some one person or another; and might probably, on any new revolution, have fallen into the hands of some one less mild and indulgent than Augustus was, at the time when Virgil wrote this poem in his service. But whatever may be said of his reasons for writing it, the poem itself has been highly applauded in all ages, from its first appearance to this day; and though left unfinished by its author, has been always reckoned as much superior to all the other

epic poems among the Romans, as Homer's is among the Greeks. *Spence.*

§ 48. *Observations on the ÆNEID, and the Author's Genius.*

It preserves more to us of the religion of the Romans, than all the other Latin poets (excepting only Ovid) put together: and gives us the forms and appearances of their deities, as strongly as if we had so many pictures of them preserved to us, done by some of the best hands in the Augustan age. It is remarkable that he is commended by some of the ancients themselves, for the strength of his imagination as to this particular, though in general that is not his character, so much as exactness. He was certainly the most correct poet even of his time; in which all false thoughts and idle ornaments in writing were discouraged: and it is as certain, that there is but little of invention in his *Æneid*; much less, I believe, than is generally imagined. Almost all the little facts in it are built on history; and even as to the particular lines, no one perhaps ever borrowed more from the poets that preceded him, than he did. He goes so far back as to old Ennius; and often inserts whole verses from him, and some other of their earliest writers. The obscurity of their style, did not hinder him much in this: for he was a particular lover of their old language; and no doubt inserted many more antiquated words in his poem, than we can discover at present. Judgment is his distinguishing character; and his great excellence consisted in choosing and ranging things aright. Whatever he borrowed he had the skill of making his own, by weaving it so well into his work, that it looks all of a piece; even those parts of his poems, where this may be most practised, resembling a fine piece of Mosaic, in which all the parts, though of such different marbles, unite together; and the various shades and colours are so artfully disposed as to melt off insensibly into one another.

One of the greatest beauties in Virgil's private character was, his modesty and good-nature. He was apt to think humbly of himself, and handsomely of others: and was ready to shew his love of merit, even where it might seem to clash with his own. He was the first who recommended Horace to Mæcenas.

Ibid.

§ 49. Of HORACE.

Horace was the fittest man in the world for a court where wit was so particularly encouraged. No man seems to have had more, and all of the gentlest sort; or to have been better acquainted with mankind. His gaiety, and even his debauchery, made him still the more agreeable to Mæcenas: so that it is no wonder that his acquaintance with that Minister grew up to so high a degree of friendship, as is very uncommon between a first Minister and a poet; and which had possibly such an effect on the latter, as one shall scarce ever hear of between any two friends, the most on a level: for there is some room to conjecture, that he hastened himself out of this world to accompany his great friend in the next. Horace has been most generally celebrated for his lyric poems; in which he far excelled all the Roman poets, and perhaps was no unworthy rival of several of the Greek: which seems to have been the height of his ambition. His next point of merit, as it has been usually reckoned, was his refining satire; and bringing it from the coarseness and harshness of Lucilius to that genteel, easy manner, which he, and perhaps nobody but he and one person more in all the ages since, has ever possessed. I do not remember that any one of the ancients says any thing of his epistles; and this has made me sometimes imagine, that his epistles and satires might originally have passed under one and the same name; perhaps that of *Sermones*. They are generally written in a style approaching to that of conversation; and are so much alike, that several of the satires might just as well be called epistles, as several of his epistles have the spirit of satire in them. This latter part of his works, by whatever name you please to call them (whether satires and epistles, or discourses in verse on moral and familiar subjects) is what, I must own, I love much better even than the lyric part of his works. It is in these that he shews that talent for criticism, in which he so very much excelled; especially in his long epistle to Augustus; and that other to the Piso's, commonly called his *Art of Poetry*. They abound in strokes which shew his great knowledge of mankind, and in that pleasing way he had of teaching philosophy, of laughing away vice, and insinuating virtue into the minds of his readers. They may

serve, as much as almost any writings can, to make men wiser and better: for he has the most agreeable way of preaching that ever was. He was, in general, an honest, good man himself; at least he does not seem to have had any one ill-natured vice about him. Other poets we admire; but there is not any of the ancient poets that I could wish to have been acquainted with, so much as Horace. One cannot be very conversant with his writings, without having a friendship for the man; and longing to have just such another as he was for one's friend.

Spence.

§ 50. Of TIBULLUS, PROPERTIUS, and OVID.

In that happy age, and in the same court, flourished Tibullus. He enjoyed the acquaintance of Horace, who mentions him in a kind and friendly manner, both in his Odes and in his Epistles. Tibullus is evidently the most exact and most beautiful writer of love verses among the Romans, and was esteemed so by their best judges; though there were some, it seems, even in their better ages of writing and judging, who preferred Propertius to him. Tibullus's talent seems to have been only for elegiac verse: at least his compliment on Messala (which is his only poem out of it) shews, I think, too plainly, that he was neither designed for heroic verse, nor panegyric. Elegance is as much his distinguishing character, among the elegiac writers of this age, as it is Terence's, among the comic writers of the former; and if his subject will never let him be sublime, his judgment at least always keeps him from being faulty.—His rival and cotemporary, Propertius, seems to have set himself too many different models, to copy either of them so well as he might otherwise have done. In one place, he calls himself the Roman Callimachus; in another, he talks of rivalling Philetas: and he is said to have studied Mimnermus, and some other of the Greek lyric writers, with the same view. You may see by this, and the practice of all their poets in general, that it was the constant method of the Romans (whenever they endeavoured to excel) to set some great Greek pattern or other before them. Propertius, perhaps, might have succeeded better, had he fixed on any one of these; and not endeavoured to improve by all of them indifferently.—Ovid makes up the triumvirate of the elegiac writers

writers of this age; and is more loose and incorrect than either of the other. As Propertius followed too many masters, Ovid endeavoured to shine in too many different kinds of writing at the same time. Besides, he had a redundant genius; and almost always chose rather to indulge, than to give any restraint to it. If one was to give any opinion of the different merits of his several works, one should not perhaps be much beside the truth, in saying, that he excels most in his *Fasti*; then perhaps in his love-verses; next in his heroic epistles; and lastly, in his *Metamorphoses*. As for the verses he wrote after his misfortunes, he has quite lost his spirit in them; and though you may discover some difference in his manner, after his banishment came to sit a little lighter on him, his genius never shines out fairly after that fatal stroke. His very love of being witty had forsaken him; though before it seems to have grown upon him, when it was least becoming, towards his old age: for his *Metamorphoses* (which was the last poem he wrote at Rome, and which indeed was not quite finished when he was sent into banishment) has more instances of false wit in it, than perhaps all his former writings put together. One of the things I have heard him most cried up for, in that piece, is his transitions from one story to another. The ancients thought differently of this point; and Quintilian, where he is speaking of them, endeavours rather to excuse than to commend him on that head. We have a considerable loss in the latter half of his *Fasti*; and in his *Medea*, which is much commended. Dramatic poetry seems not to have flourished, in proportion to the other sorts of poetry, in the Augustan age. We scarce hear any thing of the comic poets of that time; and if tragedy had been much cultivated then, the Roman writers would certainly produce some names from it, to oppose to the Greeks, without going so far back as to those of *Ætius* and *Pacuvius*. Indeed their own critics, in speaking of the dramatic writings of this age, boast rather of single pieces, than of authors: and the two particular tragedies, which they talk of in the highest strain, are the *Medea* of Ovid, and *Varius's Thyestes*. However, if it was not the age for plays, it was certainly the age in which almost all the other kinds of poetry were in their greatest excellence at Rome.

Spencer.

§ 51. OF PHÆDRUS.

Under this period of the best writing, I should be inclined to insert Phædrus. For though he published after the good manner of writing was in general on the decline, he flourished and formed his style under Augustus; and his book, though it did not appear till the reign of Tiberius, deserves, on all accounts, to be reckoned among the works of the Augustan age. *Fabulæ Æsopææ*, was probably the title which he gave his fables. He professedly follows Æsop in them; and declares, that he keeps to his manner, even where the subject is of his own invention. By this it appears, that Æsop's way of telling stories was very short and plain; for the distinguishing beauty of Phædrus's fables is, their conciseness and simplicity. The taste was so much fallen, at the time when he published them, that both these were objected to him as faults. He used those critics as they deserved. He tells a long, tedious story to those who objected against the conciseness of his style; and answers some others, who condemned the plainness of it, with a run of bombast verses, that have a great many noisy elevated words in them, without any sense at the bottom. *Ibid.*

§ 52. OF MANILIUS.

Manilius can scarce be allowed a place in this list of the Augustan poets; his poetry is inferior to a great many of the Latin poets, who have wrote in these lower ages, so long since Latin has ceased to be a living language. There is at least, I believe, no instance, in any one poet of the flourishing ages, of such language, or such versification, as we meet with in Manilius; and there is not any one ancient writer that speaks one word of any such poet about those times. I doubt not, there were bad poets enough in the Augustan age; but I question whether Manilius may deserve the honour of being reckoned even among the bad poets of that time. What must be said, then to the many passages in the poem, which relate to the times in which the author lived, and which all have a regard to the Augustan age? If the whole be not a modern forgery, I do not see how one can deny his being of that age: and if it be a modern forgery, it is very lucky that it should agree so exactly, in so many little particulars, with the ancient globe of the heavens, in the Farnese palace. Al-

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lowing Manilius's poem to pass for what it pretends to be, there is nothing remains to us of the poetical works of this Augustan age, besides what I have mentioned: except the garden poem of Columella; the little hunting piece of Grattius; and, perhaps, an elegy or two of Gallus. *Spence.*

§ 53. *Of the Poets whose Works have not come down to us.*

These are but small remains for an age in which poetry was so well cultivated and followed by very great numbers, taking the good and the bad together. It is probable, most of the best have come down to us. As for the others, we only hear of the elegies of Capella and Montanus; that Proculus imitated Callimachus; and Rufus, Pindar: that Fontanus wrote a sort of piscatory eclogues; and Macer, a poem on the nature of birds, beasts, and plants. That the same Macer, and Rabirinus, and Marfus, and Ponticus, and Peto Albino-yanus, and several others, were epic writers in that time (which, by the way, seems to have signified little more, than that they wrote in hexameter verse): that Fundanius was the best comic poet then, and Melissus no bad one: that Varius was the most esteemed for epic poetry, before the *Æneid* appeared; and one of the most esteemed for tragedy always: that Pollio (besides his other excellencies at the bar, in the camp, and in affairs of state) is much commended for tragedy; and Varius, either for tragedy or epic poetry; for it does not quite appear which of the two he wrote. These last are great names; but there remain some of still higher dignity, who are, or at least desired to be thought, poets in that time. In the former part of Augustus's reign, his first minister for home affairs, Mæcenas; and in the latter part, his grandson Germanicus, were of this number. Germanicus in particular translated Aratus; and there are some (I do not well know on what grounds) who pretend to have met with a considerable part of his translation. The emperor himself seems to have been both a good critic, and a good author. He wrote chiefly in prose; but some things in verse too; and particularly good part of a tragedy, called *Ajax*.

It is no wonder, under such encouragements, and so great examples, that poetry should arise to a higher pitch than it had ever done among the Romans. They had been gradually improving it for above two centuries; and in Augustus found a

prince, whose own inclinations, the temper of whose reign, and whose very politics, led him to nurse all the arts; and poetry, in a more particular manner. The wonder is, when they had got so far toward perfection, that they should fall as it were all at once; and from their greatest purity and simplicity, should degenerate so immediately into a lower and more affected manner of writing, than had been ever known among them. *Ibid.*

§ 54. *Of the Fall of Poetry among the Romans.*

There are some who assert, that the great age of the Roman eloquence I have been speaking of, began to decline a little even in the latter part of Augustus's reign. It certainly fell very much under Tiberius; and grew every day weaker and weaker, till it was wholly changed under Caligula. Hence therefore we may date the third age, or the fall of the Roman poetry. Augustus, whatever his natural temper was, put on at least a mildness, that gave a calm to the state during his time: the succeeding emperors flung off the mask; and not only were, but openly appeared to be, rather monsters than men. We need not go to their historians for proofs of their prodigious vileness: it is enough to mention the bare names of Tiberius, Caligula, Nero. Under such heads, every thing that was good run to ruin. All discipline in war, all domestic virtues, the very love of liberty, and all the taste for sound eloquence and good poetry, sunk gradually; and faded away, as they had flourished, together. Instead of the sensible, chaste, and manly way of writing, that had been in use in the former age, there now rose up a desire of writing smartly, and an affectation of shining in every thing they said. A certain prettiness, and glitter, and luxuriance of ornaments, was what distinguished their most applauded writers in prose; and their poetry was quite lost in high flights and obscurity. Seneca, the favourite prose writer of those times; and Petronius Arbiter, so great a favourite with many of our own; afford too many proofs of this. As to the prose in Nero's time; and as to the poets, it is enough to say, that they had then Lucan and Persius, instead of Virgil and Horace. *Ibid.*

§ 55. *Of LUCAN.*

Persius and Lucan, who were the most celebrated poets under the reign of Nero, may very well serve for examples of the faults

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faults I just mentioned, one of the swelling, and the other of the obscure style, then in fashion. Lucan's manner in general runs too much into fustian and bombast. His muse was a kind of dropsy, and looks like the soldier described in his own *Pharsalia*, who in passing the desert sands of Africa, was bit by a serpent, and swelled to such an immoderate size, "that he was lost (as he expresses it) in the tumours of his own body." Some critics have been in too great haste to make Quintilian say some good things of Lucan, which he never meant to do. What this poet has been always for, and what he will ever deserve to be admired for, are the several philosophical passages that abound in his works; and his generous sentiments, particularly on the love of liberty and the contempt of death. In his calm hours, he is very wise; but he is often in his rants, and never more so than when he is got into a battle, or a storm at sea: but it is remarkable, that even on those occasions, it is not so much a violence of rage, as a madness of affectation, that appears most strongly in him. To give a few instances of it, out of many: In the very beginning of Lucan's storm, when Cæsar ventured to cross the sea in so small a vessel; "the six stars themselves seem to be put in motion." Then "the waves rise over the mountains, and carry away the tops of them." Their next step is to heaven; where they catch the rain "in the clouds." I suppose, to increase their force. The sea opens in several places, and leaves its bottom dry land. All the foundations of the universe are shaken; and nature is afraid of a second chaos. His little skiff, in the mean time, sometimes cuts along the clouds with her sails; and sometimes seems in danger of being stranded on the sands at the bottom of the sea; and must inevitably have been lost, had not the storm (by good fortune) been so strong from every quarter, that she did not know on which side to bulge first.

When the two armies are going to join battle in the plains of *Pharsalia*, we are told, that all the soldiers were incapable of any fear for themselves, because they were wholly taken up with their concern for the danger which threatened Pompey and the commonwealth. On this great occasion, the hills about them, according to his account, seem to be more afraid than the men; for some of the mountains looked as if they would thrust their heads into the clouds; and others, as if they wanted to hide

themselves under the vallies at their feet. And these disturbances in nature were universal: for that day, every single Roman, in whatever part of the world he was, felt a strange gloom spread all over his mind, on a sudden; and was ready to cry, though he did not know why or wherefore.

Spence.

§ 56. *His Description of the Sea-fight off Marseilles.*

The sea-fight off *Marseilles*, is a thing that might divert one, full as well as Erasmus's *Naufragium Jocularè*; and what is still stranger, the poet chuses to be most diverting in the wounds he gives the poor soldier. The first person killed in it, is pierced at the same instant by two spears; one in his back, and the other in his breast; so nicely, that both their points meet together in the middle of his body. They each, I suppose, had a right to kill him; and his soul was for some time doubtful which it should obey. At last, it compounds the matter: drives out each of the spears before it, at the same instant; and whips out of his body, half at one wound, and half at the other.—A little after this, there is an honest Greek, who has his right hand cut off, and fights on with his left, till he can leap into the sea to recover the former; but there (as misfortunes seldom come single) he has his left arm chopt off too: after which, like the hero in one of our ancient ballads, he fights on with the trunk of his body, and performs actions greater than any Witherington that ever was.—When the battle grows warmer, there are many who have the same misfortune with this Greek. In endeavouring to climb up the enemies ships, several have their arms struck off; fall into the sea; leave their hands behind them! Some of these swimming combatants encounter their enemies in the water; some supply their friends ships with arms; some, that had no arms, entangle themselves with their enemies; cling to them, and sink together to the bottom of the sea; others stick their bodies against the beaks of their enemies ships: and scarce a man of them slung away the use of his carcase, even when he should be dead.

But among all the contrivances of these posthumous warriors, the thing most to be admired, is the sagacity of the great *Tyrrhenus*. *Tyrrhenus* was standing at the head of one of the vessels, when a ball of lead, slung by an artful slinger, struck out

out both his eyes. The violent dash of the blow, and the deep darkness that was spread over him all at once, made him at first conclude that he was dead: but when he had recovered his senses a little, and found he could advance one foot before the other, he desired his fellow soldiers to plant him just as they did their Ballistæ: he hopes he can still fight as well as a machine: and seems mightily pleased to think how he shall cheat the enemy, who will fling away darts at him, that might have killed people who were alive.

Such strange things as these, make me always wonder the more, how Lucan can be so wise as he is in some parts of his poem. Indeed his sentences are more solid than one could otherwise expect from so young a writer, had he wanted such an uncle as Seneca, and such a master as Cornutus. The swellings in the other parts of his poem may be partly accounted for, perhaps, from his being born in Spain, and in that part of it which was the farthest removed from Greece and Rome; nay, of that very city, which is marked by Cicero as particularly over-run with a bad taste. After all, what I most dislike him for, is a blot in his moral character. He was at first pretty high in the favour of Nero. On the discovery of his being concerned in a plot against him, this philosopher (who had written so much, and so gallantly, about the pleasure of dying) behaved himself in the most despicable manner. He named his own mother as guilty of the conspiracy, in hopes of saving himself. After this, he added several of his friends to his former confession; and thus continued labouring for a pardon, by making sacrifices to the tyrant of such lives, as any one, much less of a philosopher than he seems to have been, ought to think dearer than their own. All this baseness was of no use to him: for, in the end, Nero ordered him to execution too. His veins were opened: and the last words he spoke, were some verses of his own. *Spence.*

§ 57. OF PERSIUS.

Persius is said to have been Lucan's school-fellow under Cornutus; and, like him, was bred up more a philosopher than a poet. He has the character of a good man; but scarce deserves that of a good writer, in any other than the moral sense of the word: for his writings are very virtuous, but not very poetical. His great

fault is obscurity. Several have endeavoured to excuse or palliate this fault in him, from the danger of the times he lived in; and the necessity a satirist then lay under, of writing so, for his own security. This may hold as to some passages in him; but to say the truth, he seems to have a tendency and love to obscurity in himself: for it is not only to be found where he may speak of the emperor or the state; but in the general course of his satires. So that, in my conscience, I must give him up for an obscure writer; as I should Lucan for a tumid and swelling one.

Such was the Roman poetry under Nero. The three emperors after him were made in a hurry, and had short tumultuous reigns. Then the Flavian family came in. Vespasian, the first emperor of that line, endeavoured to recover something of the good taste that had formerly flourished in Rome; his son Titus, the delight of mankind, in his short reign, encouraged poetry by his example, as well as by his liberalities: and even Domitian loved to be thought a patron of the muses. After him, there was a succession of good emperors, from Nerva to the Antonines. And this extraordinary good fortune (for indeed, if one considers the general run of the Roman emperors, it would have been such, to have had any two good ones only together) gave a new spirit to the arts, that had long been in so languishing a condition, and made poetry revive, and raise up its head again, once more among them. Not that there were very good poets even now: but they were better, at least, than they had been under the reign of Nero.

Ibid.

§ 58. OF SILIUS, STATIUS, and VALERIUS FLACCUS.

This period produced three epic poets, whose works remain to us; Silius, Statius, and Valerius Flaccus. Silius, as if he had been frightened at the high flight of Lucan, keeps almost always on the ground, and scarce once attempts to soar throughout his whole work. It is plain, however, though it is low; and if he has but little of the spirit of poetry, he is free at least from the affectation, and obscurity, and bombast, which prevailed so much among his immediate predecessors. Silius was honoured with the consulate; and lived to see his son in the same high office. He was a great lover and collector of pictures and statues; some of which he worshipped; especially

especially one he had of Virgil. He used to offer sacrifices too at his tomb near Naples. It is a pity that he could not get more of his spirit in his writings: for he had scarce enough to make his offerings acceptable to the genius of that great poet. — Statius had more of spirit, with a less share of prudence: for his *Thebaid* is certainly ill-conducted, and scarcely well written. By the little we have of his *Achilleid*, that would probably have been a much better poem, at least as to the writing part, had he lived to finish it. As it is, his description of Achilles's behaviour at the feast which *Lycomedes* makes for the Grecian ambassadors, and some other parts of it, read more pleasingly to me than any part of the *Thebaid*. I cannot help thinking, that the passage quoted so often from *Juvenal*, as an encomium on Statius, was meant as a satire on him. *Martial* seems to strike at him too, under the borrowed name of *Sabellus*. As he did not finish his *Achilleid*, he may deserve more reputation perhaps as a miscellaneous than as an epic writer; for though the odes and other copies of verses in his *Sylvæ* are not without their faults, they are not so faulty as his *Thebaid*. The chief faults of Statius, in his *Sylvæ* and *Thebaid*, are said to have proceeded from very different causes: the former, from their having been written incorrectly and in a great deal of haste; and the other, from its being over corrected and hard. Perhaps his greatest fault of all, or rather the greatest sign of his bad judgment, is his admiring *Lucan* so extravagantly as he does. It is remarkable, that poetry run more lineally in Statius's family, than perhaps in any other. He received it from his father; who had been an eminent poet in his time, and lived to see his son obtain the laurel-crown at the Alban games; as he had formerly done himself. — *Valerius Flaccus* wrote a little before Statius. He died young, and left his poem unfinished. We have but seven books of his *Argonautics*, and part of the eighth, in which the *Argonauts* are left on the sea, in their return homewards. Several of the modern critics, who have been some way or other concerned in publishing *Flaccus's* works, make no scruple of placing him next to *Virgil*, of all the Roman epic poets; and I own I am a good deal inclined to be seriously of their opinion; for he seems to me to have more fire than *Silius*, and to be more correct than Statius;

and as for *Lucan*, I cannot help looking upon him as quite out of the question. He imitates *Virgil's* language much better than *Silius*, or even Statius; and his plan, or rather his story, is certainly less embarrassed and confused than the *Thebaid*. Some of the ancients themselves speak of *Flaccus* with a great deal of respect; and particularly *Quintilian*; who says nothing at all of *Silius* or Statius; unless the latter is to be included in that general expression of 'several others,' whom he leaves to be celebrated by posterity.

As to the dramatic writers of this time, we have not any one comedy, and only ten tragedies, all published under the name of *Lucius Annæus Seneca*. They are probably the work of different hands; and might be a collection of favourite plays, put together by some bad grammarian; for either the Roman tragedies of this age were very indifferent, or these are not their best. They have been attributed to authors as far distant as the reigns of *Augustus* and *Trajan*. It is true, the person who is so positive that one of them in particular must be of the Augustan age, says this of a piece that he seems resolved to cry up at all rates; and I believe one should do no injury to any one of them, in supposing them all to have been written in this third age, under the decline of the Roman poetry.

Of all the other poets under this period, there are none whose works remain to us, except *Martial* and *Juvenal*. The former flourished under *Domitian*; and the latter under *Nerva*, *Trajan*, and *Adrian*. *Spence*,

§ 59. OF MARTIAL.

Martial is a dealer only in a little kind of writing; for *Epigram* is certainly (what it is called by *Dryden*) the lowest step of poetry. He is at the very bottom of the hill; but he diverts himself there, in gathering flowers and playing with insects, prettily enough. If *Martial* made a new-year's gift, he was sure to send a distich with it: if a friend died, he made a few verses to put on his tomb-stone: if a statue was set up, they came to him for an inscription. These were the common offices of his muse. If he struck a fault in life, he marked it down in a few lines; and if he had a mind to please a friend, or to get the favour of the great, his style was turned to panegyric; and these were his highest employments. He was, however, a good writer in his way; and there

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are instances even of his writing with some dignity on higher occasions. *Spence.*

§ 60. Of JUVENAL.

Juvenal began to write after all I have mentioned; and, I do not know by what good fortune, writes with a greater spirit of poetry than any of them. He has scarce any thing of the gentility of Horace: yet he is not without humour, and exceeds all the satirists in severity. To say the truth, he flashes too much like an angry executioner; but the depravity of the times, and the vices then in fashion, may often excuse some degree of rage in him. It is said he did not write till he was elderly; and after he had been too much used to declaiming. However, his satires have a great deal of spirit in them; and shew a strong hatred of vice, with some very fine and high sentiments of virtue. They are indeed so animated, that I do not know any poem of this age, which one can read with near so much pleasure as his satires.

Juvenal may very well be called the last of the Roman poets. After his time, poetry continued decaying more and more, quite down to the time of Constantine; when all the arts were so far lost and extinguished among the Romans, that from that time they themselves may very well be called by the name they used to give to all the world, except the Greeks; for the Romans then had scarce any thing to distinguish them from the Barbarians.

There are, therefore, but three ages of the Roman poetry, that can carry any weight with them in an enquiry of this nature. The first age, from the first Punic war to the time of Augustus, is more remarkable for strength, than any great degree of beauty in writing. The second age, or the Augustan, is the time when they wrote with a due mixture of beauty and strength. And the third, from the beginning of Nero's reign to the end of Adrian's, when they endeavoured after beauty more than strength: when they lost much of their vigour, and run too much into affectation. Their poetry, in its youth, was strong and nervous: in its middle age, it was manly and polite; in its latter days, it grew tawdry and feeble; and endeavoured to hide the decays of its former beauty and strength, in false ornaments of dress, and a borrowed flush on the face; which did not so much render it pleasing, as it shewed that its natural complexion was faded and lost. *Ibid.*

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§ 61. Of the Introduction, Improvement, and Fall of the Arts at Rome.

The city of Rome, as well as its inhabitants, was in the beginning rude and unadorned. Those old rough soldiers looked on the effects of the politer arts as things fit only for an effeminate people; as too apt to soften and unnerve men; and to take from that martial temper and ferocity, which they encouraged so much and so universally in the infancy of their state. Their houses were (what the name they gave them signified) only a covering for them, and a defence against bad weather. These sheds of theirs were more like the caves of wild beasts, than the habitations of men; and were rather slung together as chance led them, than formed into regular streets and openings: their walls were half mud, and their roofs, pieces of wood stuck together; nay, even this was an after-improvement; for in Romulus's time, their houses were only covered with straw. If they had any thing that was finer than ordinary, that was chiefly taken up in setting off the temples of their gods; and when these began to be furnished with statues (for they had none till long after Numa's time) they were probably more fit to give terror than delight; and seemed rather formed so as to be horrible enough to strike an awe into those who worshipped them, than handsome enough to invite any one to look upon them for pleasure. Their design, I suppose, was answerable to the materials they were made of; and if their gods were of earthen ware, they were reckoned better than ordinary; for many of them were chopt out of wood. One of the chief ornaments in those times, both of the temples and private houses, consisted in their ancient trophies: which were trunks of trees cleared of their branches, and so formed into a rough kind of posts. These were loaded with the arms they had taken in war, and you may easily conceive what sort of ornaments these posts must make, when half decayed by time, and hung about with old rusty arms, besmeared with the blood of their enemies. Rome was not then that beautiful Rome, whose very ruins at this day are sought after with so much pleasure: it was a town, which carried an air of terror in its appearance; and which made people shudder, whenever they first entered within its gates, *Ibid.*

§ 62.

§ 62. *The Condition of the ROMANS in the Second PUNIC War.*

Such was the state of this imperial city, when its citizens had made so great a progress in arms as to have conquered the better part of Italy, and to be able to engage in a war with the Carthaginians; the strongest power then by land, and the absolute masters by sea. The Romans, in the first Punic war, added Sicily to their dominions. In the second, they greatly increased their strength, both by sea and land; and acquired a taste of the arts and elegancies of life, with which till then they had been totally unacquainted. For tho' before this they were masters of Sicily (which in the old Roman geography made a part of Greece) and of several cities in the eastern parts of Italy, which were inhabited by colonies from Greece, and were adorned with the pictures, and statues and other works, in which that nation delighted, and excelled the rest of the world so much; they had hitherto looked upon them with so careless an eye, that they had felt little or nothing of their beauty. This insensibility they preserved so long, either from the grossness of their minds, or perhaps from their superstition, and a dread of reverencing foreign deities as much as their own; or (which is the most likely of all) out of mere politics, and the desire of keeping up their martial spirit and natural roughness, which they thought the arts and elegancies of the Grecians would be but too apt to destroy. However that was, they generally preserved themselves from even the least suspicion of taste for the polite arts, pretty far into the second Punic war; as appears by the behaviour of Fabius Maximus in that war, even after the scales were turned on their side. When that general took Tarentum, he found it full of riches, and extremely adorned with pictures and statues. Among others, there were some very fine colossal figures of the gods, represented as fighting against the rebel giants. These were made by some of the most eminent masters in Greece; and the Jupiter, not improbably, by Lysippus. When Fabius was disposing of the spoil, he ordered the money and plate to be sent to the treasury at Rome, but the statues and pictures to be left behind. The secretary who attended him in his survey, was somewhat struck with the largeness and noble air of the figures just mentioned; and asked, Whether they too must be left

with the rest? "Yes," replied Fabius, "leave their angry gods to the Tarentines; we will have nothing to do with them." *Spence.*

§ 63. *MARCELLUS attacks SYRACUSE, and sends all its Pictures and Statues to ROME.*

Marcellus had indeed behaved himself very differently in Sicily, a year or two before this happened. As he was to carry on the war in that province, he bent the whole force of it against Syracuse. There was at that time no one city which belonged to the Greeks, more elegant, or better adorned, than the city of Syracuse; it abounded in the works of the best masters. Marcellus, when he took the city, cleared it entirely, and sent all their statues and pictures to Rome. When I say all, I use the language of the people of Syracuse; who soon after laid a complaint against Marcellus before the Roman senate, in which they charged him with stripping all their houses and temples, and leaving nothing but bare walls throughout the city. Marcellus himself did not at all disown it, but fairly confessed what he had done: and used to declare, that he had done so, in order to adorn Rome, and to introduce a taste for the fine arts among his countrymen.

Such a difference of behaviour in their two greatest leaders, soon occasioned two different parties in Rome. The old people in general joined in crying up Fabius, — Fabius was not rapacious, as some others were; but temperate in his conquests. In what he had done, he had acted, not only with that moderation which becomes a Roman general, but with much prudence and foresight. "These fineries," they cried, "are a pretty diversion for an idle effeminate people: let us leave them to the Greeks. The Romans desire no other ornaments of life, than a simplicity of manners at home, and fortitude against our enemies abroad. It is by these arts that we have raised our name so high, and spread our dominions so far: and shall we suffer them now to be exchanged for a fine taste, and what they call elegance of living? No, great Jupiter, who presidest over the capitol! let the Greeks keep their arts to themselves, and let the Romans learn only how to conquer and to govern mankind." — Another set, and particularly the younger people, who were extremely delighted with

the noble works of the Grecian artists that had been set up for some time in the temples and porticos, and all the most public places of the city, and who used frequently to spend the greatest part of the day in contemplating the beauties of them, extolled Marcellus as much for the pleasure he had given them. "We shall now," said they, "no longer be reckoned among the Barbarians. That rust, which we have been so long contracting, will soon be worn off. Other generals have conquered our enemies, but Marcellus has conquered our ignorance. We begin to see with new eyes, and have a new world of beauties opening before us. Let the Romans be polite, as well as victorious; and let us learn to excel the nations in taste, as well as to conquer them with our arms."

Whichever side was in the right, the party for Marcellus was the successful one; for, from this point of time we may date the introduction of the arts into Rome. The Romans by this means began to be fond of them; and the love of the arts is a passion, which grows very fast in any breast, wherever it is once entertained.

We may see how fast and how greatly it prevailed at Rome, by a speech which old Cato the censor made in the senate, not above seventeen years after the taking of Syracuse. He complains in it, that their people began to run into Greece and Asia; and to be infected with a desire of playing with their fine things: that as to such spoils, there was less honour in taking them, than there was danger of their being taken by them: that the gods brought from Syracuse, had revenged the cause of its citizens, in spreading this taste among the Romans: that he heard but too many daily crying up the ornaments of Corinth and Athens; and ridiculing the poor old Roman gods; who had hitherto been propitious to them; and who, he hoped, would still continue so, if they would but let their statues remain in peace upon their pedestals.

Spence.

§ 64. *The Roman Generals, in their several Conquests, convey great Numbers of Pictures and Statues to Rome.*

It was in vain too that Cato spoke against it; for the love of the arts prevailed every day more and more; and from henceforward the Roman generals, in their several conquests, seem to have strove who should bring away the greatest

number of statues and pictures, to set off their triumphs, and to adorn the city of Rome. It is surprising what accessions of this kind were made in the compass of a little more than half a century after Marcellus had set the example. The elder Scipio Africanus brought in a great number of wrought vases from Spain and Africa, toward the end of the second Punic war; and the very year after that was finished, the Romans entered into a war with Greece, the great school of all the arts, and the chief repository of most of the finest works that ever were produced by them. It would be endless to mention all their acquisitions from hence; I shall only put you in mind of some of the most considerable. Flaminius made a great show both of statues and vases in his triumph over Philip king of Macedonia; but he was much exceeded by Æmilius, who reduced that kingdom into a province. Æmilius's triumph lasted three days; the first of which was wholly taken up in bringing in the fine statues he had selected in his expedition; as the chief ornament of the second consisted of vases and sculptured vessels of all sorts, by the most eminent hands. These were all the most chosen things, culled from the collection of that successor of Alexander the Great; for as to the inferior spoils of no less than seventy Grecian cities, Æmilius had left them all to his soldiery, as not worthy to appear among the ornaments of his triumph. Not many years after this, the young Scipio Africanus (the person who is most celebrated for his polite taste of all the Romans hitherto, and who was scarce exceeded by any one of them in all the succeeding ages) destroyed Carthage, and transferred many of the chief ornaments of that city, which had so long bid fair for being the seat of empire, to Rome, which soon became undoubtedly so. This must have been a vast accession: though that great man, who was as just in his actions as he was elegant in his taste, did not bring all the finest of his spoils to Rome, but left a great part of them in Sicily, from whence they had formerly been taken by the Carthaginians. The very same year that Scipio freed Rome from its most dangerous rival, Carthage, Mummius (who was as remarkable for his rusticity, as Scipio was for elegance and taste) added Achaia to the Roman state; and sacked, among several others, the famous city of Corinth, which had been long looked upon as one of the principal reservoirs

reservoirs of the finest works of art. He cleared it of all its beauties, without knowing any thing of them: even without knowing, that an old Grecian statue was better than a new Roman one. He used, however, the surest method of not being mistaken; for he took all indifferently as they came in his way; and brought them off in such quantities, that he alone is said to have filled Rome with statues and pictures. Thus, partly from the taste, and partly from the vanity of their generals, in less than seventy years time (reckoning from Marcellus's taking of Syracuse to the year in which Carthage was destroyed) Italy was furnished with the noblest productions of the ancient artists, that before lay scattered all over Spain, Africa, Sicily, and the rest of Greece. Sylla, beside many others, added vastly to them afterwards; particularly by his taking of Athens, and by his conquests in Asia; where, by his too great indulgence to his armies, he made taste and rapine a general thing, even among the common soldiers, as it had been, for a long time, among their leaders.

In this manner, the first considerable acquisitions were made by their conquering armies; and they were carried on by the persons sent out to govern their provinces, when conquered. As the behaviour of these in their governments, in general, was one of the greatest blots on the Roman nation, we must not expect a full account of their transactions in the old historians, who treat particularly of the Roman affairs: for such of these that remain to us, are either Romans themselves, or else Greeks who were too much attached to the Roman interest, to speak out the whole truth in this affair. But what we cannot have fully from their own historians, may be pretty well supplied from other hands. A poet of their own, who seems to have been a very honest man, has set the rapaciousness of their governors in general in a very strong light; as Cicero has set forth that of Verres in particular, as strongly. If we may judge of their general behaviour by that of this governor of Sicily, they were more like monsters and harpies, than men. For that public robber (as Cicero calls him, more than once) hunted over every corner of his island, with a couple of sinders (one a Greek painter, and the other a statuary of the same nation) to get together his collection; and was so curious and so rapacious in that search, that Cicero says, there was not a gem, or statue, or relieve, or picture,

in all Sicily, which he did not see; nor any one he liked, which he did not take away from its owner. What he thus got, he sent into Italy. Rome was the centre both of their spoils in war, and of their rapines in peace: and if many of their prætors and proconsuls acted but in half so abandoned a manner as this Verres appears to have done, it is very probable that Rome was more enriched in all these sort of things secretly by their governors, than it had been openly by their generals. *Spence.*

§ 65. *The Methods made use of in drawing the Works of the best ancient Artists into ITALY.*

There was another method of augmenting these treasures at Rome, not so infamous as this, and not so glorious as the former. What I mean, was the custom of the *Ædiles*, when they exhibited their public games, of adorning the theatres and other places where they were performed, with great numbers of statues and pictures: which they bought up or borrowed, for that purpose, all over Greece, and sometimes even from Asia. Scæurus, in particular, in his *ædileship*, had no less than three thousand statues and relieves for the mere ornamenting of the stage, in a theatre built only for four or five days. This was the same Scæurus who (whilst he was in the same office too) brought to Rome all the pictures of Sicily, which had been so long one of the most eminent schools in Greece for painting; in lieu of debts owing, or pretended to be owed, from that city to the Roman people.

From these public methods of drawing the works of the best ancient artists into Italy, it grew at length to be a part of private luxury, affected by almost every body that could afford it, to adorn their houses, their porticos, and their gardens, with the best statues and pictures they could procure out of Greece or Asia. None went earlier into this taste, than the family of the Luculli, and particularly Lucius Lucullus, who carried on the war against Mithridates. He was remarkable for his love of the arts and polite learning even from a child; and in the latter part of his life gave himself up so much to collections of this kind, that Plutarch reckons it among his follies. "As I am speaking of his faults (says that historian in his life) I should not omit his vast baths, and piazzas for walking; or his gardens, which were much more magnificent than any in his time

at Rome, and equal to any in the luxurious ages that followed; nor his excessive fondness for statues and pictures, which he got from all parts, to adorn his works and gardens, at an immense expence; and with the vast riches he had heaped together in the Mithridatic war." There were several other families which fell about that time into the same sort of excess; and, among the rest, the Julian. The first emperor, who was of that family, was a great collector; and, in particular, was as fond of old gems, as his successor, Augustus, was of Corinthian vases.

This may be called the first age of the flourishing of the politer arts at Rome; or rather the age in which they were introduced there: for the people in this period were chiefly taken up in getting fine things, and bringing them together. There were perhaps some particular persons in it of a very good taste: but in general one may say, there was rather a love, than any great knowledge of their beauties, during this age, among the Romans. They were brought to Rome in the first part of it, in greater numbers than can be easily conceived; and in some time, every body began to look upon them with pleasure. The collection was continually augmenting afterwards, from the several methods I have mentioned; and I doubt not but a good taste would have been a general thing among them much earlier than it was, had it not been for the frequent convulsions in their state, and the perpetual struggles of some great man or other to get the reins of government into his hands. These continued quite from Sylla's time to the establishment of the state under Augustus. The peaceful times that then succeeded, and the encouragement which was given by that emperor to all the arts, afforded the Romans full leisure to contemplate the fine works that were got together at Rome in the age before, and to perfect their taste in all the elegancies of life. The artists, who were then much invited to Rome, worked in a style greatly superior to what they had done even in Julius Cæsar's time: so that it is under Augustus that we may begin the second, and most perfect age of sculpture and painting, as well as of poetry. Augustus changed the whole appearance of Rome itself; he found it ill built, and left it a city of marble. He adorned it with buildings, extremely finer than any it could boast before his time, and set off all those buildings, and even the common

streets, with an addition of some of the finest statues in the world. *Spence.*

§ 66. *On the Decline of the Arts, Eloquence, and Poetry, upon the Death of Augustus.*

On the death of Augustus, though the arts, and the taste for them, did not suffer so great a change, as appeared immediately in the taste of eloquence and poetry, yet they must have suffered a good deal. There is a secret union, a certain kind of sympathy between all the polite arts, which makes them languish and flourish together. The same circumstances are either kind or unfriendly to all of them. The favour of Augustus, and the tranquillity of his reign, was as a gentle dew from heaven, in a favourable season, that made them bud forth and flourish: and the four reign of Tiberius, was as a sudden frost that checked their growth, and at last killed all their beauties. The vanity, and tyranny, and disturbances of the times that followed, gave the finishing stroke to sculpture as well as eloquence, and to painting as well as poetry. The Greek artists at Rome were not so soon or so much infected by the bad taste of the court, as the Roman writers were; but it reached them too, though by slower and more imperceptible degrees. Indeed what else could be expected from such a run of monsters as Tiberius, Caligula, and Nero? For these were the emperors under whose reigns the arts began to languish; and they suffered so much from their baleful influence, that the Roman writers soon after them speak of all the arts as being brought to a very low ebb. They talk of their being extremely fallen in general; and as to painting, in particular, they represent it as in a most feeble and dying condition. The series of so many good emperors, which happened after Domitian, gave some spirit again to the arts; but soon after the Antonines, they all declined apace, and, by the time of the thirty tyrants, were quite fallen, so as never to rise again under any future Roman emperor.

You may see by these two accounts I have given you of the Roman poetry, and of the other arts, that the great periods of their rise, their flourishing, and their decline, agree very well; and, as it were, tally with one another. Their style was prepared, and a vast collection of fine works laid in, under the first period, or in the times of the republic; In the second,

or the Augustan age, their writers and artists were both in their highest perfection; and in the third, from Tiberius to the Antonines, they both began to languish; and then revived a little; and at last sunk totally together.

In comparing the descriptions of their poets with the works of art, I should therefore chuse to omit all the Roman poets after the Antonines. Among them all, there is perhaps no one whose omission need be regretted, except that of Claudian; and even as to him it may be considered, that he wrote when the true knowledge of the arts was no more; and when the true taste of poetry was strangely corrupted and lost; even if we were to judge of it by his own writings only, which are extremely better than any of the poets long before and long after him. It is therefore much better to confine one's self to the three great ages, than to run so far out of one's way for a single poet or two; whose authorities, after all, must be very disputable, and indeed scarce of any weight.

Spence.

§ 67. ON DEMOSTHENES.

I shall not spend any time upon the circumstances of Demosthenes's life; they are well known. The strong ambition which he discovered to excel in the art of speaking; the unsuccessfulness of his first attempts; his unwearied perseverance in surmounting all the disadvantages that arose from his person and address; his shutting himself up in a cave, that he might study with less distraction, his declaiming by the sea-shore, that he might accustom himself to the noise of a tumultuous assembly, and with pebbles in his mouth, that he might correct a defect in his speech; his practising at home with a naked sword hanging over his shoulder, that he might check an ungraceful motion, to which he was subject; all those circumstances, which we learn from Plutarch, are very encouraging to such as study Eloquence, as they shew how far art and application may avail, for acquiring an excellence which nature seemed unwilling to grant us.

Blair.

§ 68. DEMOSTHENES imitated the manly Eloquence of PERICLES.

Despising the affected and florid manner which the rhetoricians of that age followed, Demosthenes returned to the forcible and manly eloquence of Pericles; and strength and vehemence form the principal characteristics of his Style. Never had

orator a finer field than Demosthenes in his Olynthiacs and Philippics, which are his capital orations; and, no doubt, to the nobleness of the subject, and to that integrity and public spirit which eminently breathe in them, they are indebted for much of their merit. The subject is, to rouse the indignation of his countrymen against Philip of Macedon, the public enemy of the liberties of Greece; and to guard them against the insidious measures, by which that crafty prince endeavoured to lay them asleep to danger. In the prosecution of this end, we see him taking every proper method to animate a people, renowned for justice, humanity and valour, but in many instances become corrupt and degenerate. He boldly taxes them with their venality, their indolence, and indifference to the public cause; while at the same time, with all the art of an orator, he recalls the glory of their ancestors to their thoughts, shews them that they are still a flourishing and a powerful people, the natural protectors of the liberty of Greece, and who wanted only the inclination to exert themselves, in order to make Philip tremble. With his cotemporary orators, who were in Philip's interest, and who persuaded the people to peace, he keeps no measures, but plainly reproaches them as the betrayers of their country. He not only prompts to vigorous conduct, but he lays down the plan of that conduct; he enters into particulars; and points out, with great exactness, the measures of execution. This is the strain of these orations. They are strongly animated; and full of the impetuosity and fire of public spirit. They proceed in a continued train of inductions, consequences, and demonstrations, founded on sound reason. The figures which he uses, are never sought after; but always rise from the subject. He employs them sparingly indeed; for splendour and ornament are not the distinctions of this orator's composition. It is an energy of thought, peculiar to himself, which forms his character, and sets him above all others. He appears to attend much more to things than to words. We forget the orator, and think of the business. He warms the mind, and impels to action. He has no parade and ostentation; no methods of insinuation; no laboured introductions; but is like a man full of his subject, who, after preparing his audience, by a sentence or two for hearing plain truths, enters directly on business.

Ibid.

§ 69. DEMOSTHENES *contrasted with*
ÆSCHINES.

Demosthenes appears to great advantage, when contrasted with Æschines, in the celebrated oration "pro Corona." Æschines was his rival in business, and personal enemy; and one of the most distinguished orators of that age. But when we read the two orations, Æschines is feeble in comparison of Demosthenes, and makes much less impression on the mind. His reasonings concerning the law that was in question, are indeed very subtle; but his invective against Demosthenes is general, and ill-supported. Whereas Demosthenes is a torrent, that nothing can resist. He bears down his antagonist with violence; he draws his character in the strongest colours; and the particular merit of that oration is, that all the descriptions in it are highly picturesque. There runs through it a strain of magnanimity and high honour: the orator speaks with that strength and conscious dignity which great actions and public spirit alone inspire. Both orators use great liberties with one another; and, in general, that unrestrained licence which ancient manners permitted, even to the length of abusive names and downright scurrility, as appears both here and in Cicero's Philippics, hurts and offends a modern ear. What those ancient orators gained by such a manner in point of freedom and boldness, is more than compensated by want of dignity; which seems to give an advantage, in this respect, to the greater decency of modern speaking. *Blair.*

§ 70. *On the Style of* DEMOSTHENES.

The Style of Demosthenes is strong and concise, though sometimes, it must not be dissembled, harsh and abrupt. His words are very expressive; his arrangement is firm and manly; and, tho' far from being unmusical, yet it seems difficult to find in him that studied, but concealed number, and rhythmus, which some of the ancient critics are fond of attributing to him. Negligent of those lesser graces, one would rather conceive him to have aimed at that sublime which lies in sentiment. His actions and pronunciation are recorded to have been uncommonly vehement and ardent; which, from the manner of his composition, we are naturally led to believe. The character which one forms of him, from reading his works, is of the

austere, rather than the gentle kind. He is, on every occasion, grave, serious, passionate; takes every thing on a high tone; never lets himself down, nor attempts any thing like pleasantry. If any fault can be found in his admirable eloquence, it is, that he sometimes borders on the hard and dry. He may be thought to want smoothness and grace; which Dionysius of Halicarnassus attributes to his imitating too closely the manner of Thucydides, who was his great model for Style, and whose history he is said to have written eight times over with his own hand. But these defects are far more than compensated, by that admirable and masterly force of masculine eloquence, which, as it overpowered all who heard it, cannot, at this day, be read without emotion.

After the days of Demosthenes, Greece lost her liberty, eloquence of course languished, and relapsed again into the feeble manner introduced by the Rhetoricians and Sophists. Demetrius Phalerius, who lived in the next age to Demosthenes, attained indeed some character, but he is represented to us as a flowery, rather than a persuasive speaker, who aimed at grace rather than substance. "Delectabat Athenienses," says Cicero, "magis quam inflammabat." "He amused the Athenians, rather than warmed them." And after this time, we hear of no more Grecian orators of any note. *Ibid.*

§ 71. *On* CICERO.

The object in this period most worthy to draw our attention, is Cicero himself; whose name alone suggests every thing that is splendid in oratory. With the history of his life, and with his character, as a man and a politician, we have not at present any direct concern. We consider him only as an eloquent speaker; and, in this view, it is our business to remark both his virtues, and his defects, if he has any. His virtues are, beyond controversy, eminently great. In all his orations there is high art. He begins, generally, with a regular exordium; and with much preparation and insinuation prepossesses the hearers, and studies to gain their affections. His method is clear, and his arguments are arranged with great propriety. His method is indeed more clear than that of Demosthenes; and this is one advantage which he has over him. We find every thing in its proper place; he never attempts to move till he has endeavoured to convince: and

and in moving, especially the softer passions, he is very successful. No man, that ever wrote, knew the power and force of words better than Cicero. He rolls them along with the greatest beauty and pomp; and in the structure of his sentences, is curious and exact to the highest degree. He is always full and flowing, never abrupt. He is a great amplifier of every subject; magnificent, and in his sentiments highly moral. His manner is on the whole diffuse, yet it is often happily varied, and suited to the subject. In his four orations, for instance, against Catiline, the tone and style of each of them, particularly the first and last, is very different, and accommodated with a great deal of judgment to the occasion, and the situation in which they were spoken. When a great public object roused his mind, and demanded indignation and force, he departs considerably from that loose and declamatory manner to which he inclines at other times, and becomes exceedingly cogent and vehement. This is the case in his orations against Anthony, and in those too against Verres and Catiline. *Blair.*

§ 72. *Defects of Cicero.*

Together with those high qualities which Cicero possesses, he is not exempt from certain defects, of which it is necessary to take notice. For the Ciceronian Eloquence is a pattern so dazzling by its beauties, that, if not examined with accuracy and judgment, it is apt to betray the unwary into a faulty imitation; and I am of opinion, that it has sometimes produced this effect. In most of his orations, especially those composed in the earlier part of his life, there is too much art; even carried the length of ostentation. There is too visible a parade of eloquence. He seems often to aim at obtaining admiration, rather than at operating conviction, by what he says. Hence, on some occasions, he is showy, rather than solid; and diffuse, where he ought to have been pressing. His sentences are, at all times, round and sonorous; they cannot be accused of monotony, for they possess variety of cadence; but, from too great a study of magnificence, he is sometimes deficient in strength. On all occasions, where there is the least room for it, he is full of himself. His great actions, and the real services which he had performed to his country, apologize for this in part; ancient manners, too, imposed fewer re-

straints from the side of decorum; but, even after these allowances made, Cicero's ostentation of himself cannot be wholly palliated; and his orations, indeed all his works, leave on our minds the impression of a good man, but withal, of a vain man.

The defects which we have now taken notice of in Cicero's eloquence, were not unobserved by his own contemporaries. This we learn from Quintilian, and from the author of the dialogue, "*de Causis Corruptæ Eloquentiæ.*" Brutus we are informed called him, "*fractum et clumbem,*" broken and enervated. "*Suorum temporum homines,*" says Quintilian, "*inceffere audebant eum ut tumidiorem & Asiaticum, et redundantem, et in repetitionibus nimium, et in salibus aliquando frigidum, & in compositione fractum et exultantem, & penè viro molliorem.*" These censures were undoubtedly carried too far; and favour of malignity and personal enmity. They saw his defects, but they aggravated them; and the source of these aggravations can be traced to the difference which prevailed in Rome, in Cicero's days, between two great parties, with respect to eloquence, the "*Attici,*" and the "*Asiani.*" The former, who called themselves the Attics, were the patrons of what they conceived to be the chaste, simple, and natural style of eloquence; from which they accused Cicero as having departed, and as leaning to the florid Asiatic manner. In several of his rhetorical works, particularly in his "*Orator ad Brutum,*" Cicero, in his turn, endeavours to expose this sect, as substituting a frigid and jejune manner in place of the true Attic eloquence; and contends, that his own composition was formed upon the real Attic Style. In the tenth Chapter of the last Book of Quintilian's Institutions, a full account is given of the disputes between these two parties; and of the Rhodian, or middle manner between the Attics and the Asiatics. Quintilian himself declares on Cicero's side; and, whether it be Attic or Asiatic, prefers the full, the copious, and the amplifying style. He concludes with this very just observation: "*Plures sunt eloquentiæ facies; sed stultissimum*

* "His contemporaries ventured to reproach him as swelling, redundant, and Asiatic; too frequent in repetitions; in his attempts towards wit sometimes cold; and, in the strain of his composition, feeble, desultory, and more effeminate than became a man."

"est querere, ad quam recturus se sit orator; tam omnis species, quæ modò recta est, habeat usum.—Utetur enim, ut res exigit, omnibus; nec pro causa modò, sed pro partibus causæ." *Blair.*

§ 73. *Comparison of CICERO and DEMOSTHENES.*

On the subject of comparing Cicero and Demosthenes, much has been said by critical writers. The different manners of these two princes of eloquence, and the distinguishing characters of each, are so strongly marked in their writings, that the comparison is, in many respects, obvious and easy. The character of Demosthenes is vigour and austerity; that of Cicero is gentleness and insinuation. In the one, you find more manliness; in the other, more ornament. The one is more harsh, but more spirited and cogent; the other more agreeable, but withal, looser and weaker.

To account for this difference, without any prejudice to Cicero, it has been said, that we must look to the nature of their different auditories; that the refined Athenians followed with ease the concise and convincing eloquence of Demosthenes; but that a manner more popular, more flowery, and declamatory, was requisite in speaking to the Romans, a people less acute, and less acquainted with the arts of speech. But this is not satisfactory. For we must observe, that the Greek orator spoke much oftener before a mixed multitude, than the Roman. Almost all the public business of Athens was transacted in popular assemblies. The common people were his hearers, and his judges. Whereas Cicero generally addressed himself to the "Patres Conscripti," or, in criminal trials, to the Prætor, and the Select Judges; and it cannot be imagined, that the persons of highest rank and best education in Rome, required a more diffuse manner of pleading than the common citizens of Athens, in order to make them understand the cause, or relish the speaker. Perhaps we shall come nearer the truth, by observing, that to unite toge-

ther all the qualities, without the least exception, that form a perfect orator, and to excel equally in each of those qualities, is not to be expected from the limited powers of human genius. The highest degree of strength is, I suspect, never found united with the highest degree of smoothness and ornament: equal attentions to both are incompatible; and the genius that carries ornament to its utmost length, is not of such a kind, as can excel as much in vigour. For there plainly lies the characteristic difference between these two celebrated orators.

It is a disadvantage to Demosthenes, that, besides his conciseness, which sometimes produces obscurity, the language, in which he writes, is less familiar to most of us than the Latin, and that we are less acquainted with the Greek antiquities than we are with the Roman. We read Cicero with more ease, and of course with more pleasure. Independent of this circumstance too, he is no doubt, in himself, a more agreeable writer than the other. But notwithstanding this advantage, I am of opinion, that were the state in danger, or some great public interest at stake, which drew the serious attention of men, an oration in the spirit and strain of Demosthenes would have more weight, and produce greater effects, than one in the Ciceronian manner. Were Demosthenes's Philippics spoken in a British assembly, in a similar conjuncture of affairs, they would convince and persuade at this day. The rapid style, the vehement reasoning, the disdain, anger, boldness, freedom, which perpetually animate them, would render their success infallible over any modern assembly. I question whether the same can be said of Cicero's orations; whose eloquence, however beautiful, and however well suited to the Roman taste, yet borders oftener on declamation, and is more remote from the manner in which we now expect to hear real business and causes of importance treated.*

In comparing Demosthenes and Cicero, most of the French critics incline to give the preference to the latter. P. Rapin the Jesuit, in the parallels which he has drawn between some of the most eminent Greek

* "Eloquence admits of many different forms; and nothing can be more foolish than to enquire, by which of them an orator is to regulate his composition; since every form, which is in itself just, has its own place and use. The Orator, according as circumstances require, will employ them all; suiting them not only to the cause or subject of which he treats, but to the different parts of that subject."

* In this judgment I concur with Mr. David Hume, in his Essay upon Eloquence. He gives it as his opinion, that, of all human productions, the Orations of Demosthenes present to us the models which approach the nearest to perfection.

and Roman writers, uniformly decides in favour of the Roman. For the preference which he gives to Cicero, he assigns, and lays stress on one reason of a pretty extraordinary nature; viz. that Demosthenes could not possibly have so complete an insight as Cicero into the manners and passions of men; Why?—Because he had not the advantage of perusing Aristotle's treatise of Rhetoric, wherein, says our critic, he has fully laid open that mystery: and, to support this weighty argument, he enters into a controversy with A. Gellius, in order to prove that Aristotle's Rhetoric was not published till after Demosthenes had spoken, at least, his most considerable orations. Nothing can be more childish. Such orators as Cicero and Demosthenes, derived their knowledge of the human passions and their power of moving them, from higher sources than any treatise of rhetoric. One French critic has indeed departed from the common track; and, after bestowing on Cicero those just praises, to which the consent of so many ages shews him to be entitled, concludes, however, with giving the palm to Demosthenes. This is Fenelon, the famous archbishop of Cambray, and author of *Télémaque*; himself, surely, no enemy to all the graces and flowers of composition. It is in his *Reflections on Rhetoric and Poetry*, that he gives this judgment; a small tract, commonly published along with his *Dialogues on Eloquence* *. These dialogues and reflections are particularly worthy of perusal, as containing, I think,

* As his expressions are remarkably happy and beautiful, the passage here referred to deserves to be inserted. "Je ne crains pas dire, que Demosthène me paroît supérieur à Cicéron. Je proteste que personne n'admire plus Cicéron que je fais. Il embellit tout ce qu'il touche. Il fait honneur à la parole. Il fait des mots ce qu'un autre n'en sauroit faire. Il a je ne sais combien de sortes d'esprits. Il est même court, & véhément, toutes les fois qu'il veut l'être; contre Catiline, contre Verres, contre Antoine. Mais on remarque quelque pureté dans ses discours. L'art y est merveilleux; mais on l'entrevoit. L'orateur en pensant au salut de la république, ne s'oublie pas, et ne se laisse pas oublier. Demosthène paroît sortir de soi, et ne voit que la patrie. Il ne cherche point le beau; il le fait, sans y penser. Il est au-dessus de l'admiration. Il se sert de la parole, comme un homme modeste de son habit, pour se couvrir. Il tonne; il s'effraye. C'est un torrent qui entraîne tout. On ne peut le critiquer, parcequ'on est saisi. On pense aux choses qu'il dit, & non à ses pa-

the justest ideas on the subject, that are to be met with in any modern critical writer. Blair.

§ 74. On the Means of improving in ELOQUENCE.

Next to moral qualifications, what, in the second place, is most necessary to an orator, is a fund of knowledge. Much is this inculcated by Cicero and Quintilian: "Quod omnibus disciplinis et artibus debet esse instructus Orator." By which they mean, that he ought to have what we call a Liberal Education; and to be formed by a regular study of philosophy, and the polite arts. We must never forget that,

Scribendi recte, sapere est & principium & fons,

Good sense and knowledge are the foundation of all good speaking. There is no art that can teach one to be eloquent, in any sphere, without a sufficient acquaintance with what belongs to that sphere; or if there were an art that made such pretensions, it would be mere quackery, like the pretensions of the sophists of old, to teach their disciples to speak for and against every subject; and would be deservedly exploded by all wise men. Attention to style, to composition, and all the arts of speech, can only assist an orator in setting off, to advantage, the stock of materials which he possesses; but the stock, the materials themselves, must be brought from other quarters than from rhetoric. He who is to plead at the bar, must make himself thoroughly master of the knowledge of the law; of all the learning and experience that can be useful in his profession, for supporting a cause, or convincing a judge. He who is to speak from the pulpit, must apply himself closely to the study of divinity, of practical religion, of morals, of human nature; that he may be rich in all the topics both of instruction and of persuasion. He who would fit himself for being a member of the supreme council of the nation, or of any public assembly, must be thoroughly acquainted with the business that belongs to such assembly; he must

roles. On le perd de vue. On n'est occupé que de Philippe qui envahit tout. Je suis charmé de ces deux orateurs; mais j'avoue que je suis moins touché de l'art infini, & de la magnifique éloquence de Cicéron, que de la rapide simplicité de Demosthène."

study

study the forms of court, the course of procedure; and must attend minutely to all the facts that may be the subject of question or deliberation.

Besides the knowledge that properly belongs to that profession to which he addict himself, a public speaker, if ever he expects to be eminent, must make himself acquainted, as far as his necessary occupations allow, with the general circle of polite literature. The study of poetry may be useful to him on many occasions, for embellishing his style, for suggesting lively images, or agreeable allusions. The study of history may be still more useful to him; as the knowledge of facts, of eminent characters, and of the course of human affairs, finds place on many occasions *. There are few great occasions of public speaking, in which one will not derive assistance from cultivated taste, and extensive knowledge. They will often yield him materials for proper ornament; sometimes, for argument and real use. A deficiency of knowledge, even in subjects that belong not directly to his own profession, will expose him to many disadvantages, and give better qualified rivals a great superiority over him.

Blair.

§ 75. *A Habit of Industry recommended to the intended Speaker.*

Allow me to recommend, in the third place, not only the attainment of useful knowledge, but a habit of application and industry. Without this, it is impossible to excel in any thing. We must not imagine that it is by a sort of mushroom growth, that one can rise to be a distinguished pleader, or preacher, or speaker in any assembly. It is not by starts of application, or by a few years preparation of study afterwards discontinued, that eminence can be attained. No; it can be attained only by means of regular industry, grown up into a habit, and ready to be exerted on every occasion that calls for industry. This is the fixed law of our nature; and he must have a very high opinion of his own genius indeed, that can believe himself an exception to it. A very

* "Imprimis verò, abundare debet Orator exemplorum copiam, cum veterum, tum etiam novorum; aded ut non modò quæ conscripta sunt historiarum, aut sermonibus velut per manus tradita, quæque quotidie aguntur, debeat addere; verùm ne ea quidem quàm clarioribus potius sunt sicta negligere." QUINCT. L. xii. Cap. 4.

wise law of our nature it is; for industry is, in truth, the great "Condimentum," the seasoning of every pleasure; without which life is doomed to languish. Nothing is so great an enemy both to honourable attainments, and to the real, to the brisk, and spirited enjoyment of life, as that relaxed state of mind which raises from indolence and dissipation. One that is destined to excel in any art, especially in the arts of speaking and writing, will be known by this more than by any other mark whatever, an enthusiasm for that art; an enthusiasm, which, firing his mind with the object he has in view, will dispose him to relish every labour which the means require. It was this that characterised the great men of antiquity; it is this, which must distinguish the moderns who would tread their steps. This honourable enthusiasm, it is highly necessary for such as are studying oratory to cultivate. If youth wants it, manhood will flag miserably.

Ibid.

§ 76. *Attention to the best Models recommended to the Student in Eloquence.*

Attention to the best models will contribute greatly towards improvement. Every one who speaks or writes should, indeed, endeavour to have somewhat that is his own, that is peculiar to himself, and that characterises his composition and style. Slavish imitation depresses genius, or rather betrays the want of it. But withal, there is no genius so original, but may be profited and assisted by the aid of proper examples, in style, composition, and delivery. They always open some new ideas; they serve to enlarge and correct our own. They quicken the current of thought, and excite emulation.

Ibid.

§ 77. *Caution necessary in choosing Models.*

Much, indeed, will depend upon the right choice of models which we purpose to imitate; and supposing them rightly chosen, a farther care is requisite, of not being seduced by a blind universal admiration. For, "decipit exemplar, vitiis imitabile." Even in the most finished models we can select, it must not be forgotten, that there are always some things improper for imitation. We should study to acquire a just conception of the peculiar characteristic beauties of any writer, or public speaker, and imitate these only. One ought

sought never to attach himself too closely to any single model: for he who does so, is almost sure of being seduced into a faultiness and affected imitation. His business should be, to draw from several the proper ideas of perfection. *Blair.*

§ 78. *On the Style of BOLINGBROKE and SWIFT.*

Some authors there are, whose manner of writing approaches nearer to the style of speaking than others; and who, therefore, can be imitated with more safety. In this class, among the English authors, are Dean Swift, and Lord Bolingbroke. The Dean, throughout all his writings, in the midst of much correctness, maintains the easy natural manner of an unaffected speaker; and this is one of his chief excellencies. Lord Bolingbroke's style is more splendid, and more declamatory than Dean Swift's; but still it is the style of one who speaks, or rather who harangues. Indeed, all his political writings (for it is to them only, and not to his philosophical ones, that this observation can be applied) carry much more the appearance of one declaiming with warmth in a great assembly, than of one writing in a closet, in order to be read by others. They have all the copiousness, the fervour, the inculcating method, that is allowable and graceful in an orator; perhaps too much of it for a writer: and it is to be regretted, as I have formerly observed, that the matter contained in them should have been so trivial or so false; for, from the manner and style, considerable advantage might be reaped. *Ibid.*

§ 79. *Frequent Exercise in composing and speaking, necessary for Improvement in Eloquence.*

Besides attention to the best models, frequent exercise, both in composing and speaking, will be admitted to be a necessary mean of improvement. That sort of composition is, doubtless, most useful, which relates to the profession, or kind of public speaking, to which persons addict themselves. This they should keep ever in their eye, and be gradually inuring themselves to it. But let me also advise them, not to allow themselves in negligent composition of any kind. He who has it for his aim to write, or to speak correctly, should, in the most trivial kind of composition, in writing a letter, nay, even in

common discourse, study to acquit himself with propriety. I do not at all mean, that he is never to write, or to speak a word, but in elaborate and artificial language. This would form him to a stiffness and affectation, worse, by ten thousand degrees, than the greatest negligence. But it is to be observed, that there is, in every thing, a manner which is becoming, and has propriety; and opposite to it, there is a clumsy and faulty performance of the same thing. The becoming manner is very often the most light, and seemingly careless manner; but it requires taste and attention to seize the just idea of it. That idea, when acquired, we should keep in our eye, and form upon it whatever we write or say. *Ibid.*

§ 80. *Of what Use the Study of critical and rhetorical Writers may be.*

It now only remains to enquire, of what use may the study of critical and rhetorical writers be, for improving one in the practice of eloquence? These are certainly not to be neglected; and yet, I dare not say that much is to be expected from them. For professed writers on public speaking, we must look chiefly among the ancients. In modern times, for reasons which were before given, popular eloquence, as an art, has never been very much the object of study; it has not the same powerful effect among us that it had in more democratical states; and therefore has not been cultivated with the same care. Among the moderns, though there has been a great deal of good criticism on the different kinds of writing, yet much has not been attempted on the subject of eloquence, or public discourse; and what has been given us of that kind has been drawn mostly from the ancients. Such a writer as Joannes Gerardus Vossius, who has gathered into one heap of pondrous lumber, all the trifling, as well as the useful things, that are to be found in the Greek and Roman writers, is enough to disgust one with the study of eloquence. Among the French, there has been more attempted, on this subject, than among the English. The Bishop of Cambray's writings on eloquence, I before mentioned with honour. Rollin, Batteux, Crevier, Gibert, and several other French critics, have also written on oratory; but though some of them may be useful, none of them are so considerable as to deserve particular recommendation. *Ibid.*

§ 81. *Recourse must chiefly be had to the original Writers.*

It is to the original ancient writers that we must chiefly have recourse; and it is a reproach to any one, whose profession calls him to speak in public, to be unacquainted with them. In all the ancient rhetorical writers, there is, indeed, this defect, that they are too systematical, as I formerly shewed; they aim at doing too much; at reducing rhetoric to a complete and perfect art, which may even supply invention with materials on every subject; inasmuch that one would imagine they expected to form an orator by rule, in as mechanical a manner as one would form a carpenter. Whereas, all that can in truth be done, is to give openings for assisting and enlightening taste, and for pointing out to genius the course it ought to hold.

Aristotle laid the foundation for all that was afterwards written on the subject. That amazing and comprehensive genius, which does honour to human nature, and which gave light into so many different sciences, has investigated the principles of rhetoric with great penetration. Aristotle appears to have been the first who took rhetoric out of the hands of the sophists, and introduced reasoning and good sense into the art. Some of the profoundest things which have been written on the passions and manners of men, are to be found in his *Treatise on Rhetoric*; though in this, as in all his writings, his great brevity often renders him obscure. Succeeding Greek rhetoricians, most of whom are now lost, improved on the foundation which Aristotle had laid. Two of them still remain, Demetrius Phalerius, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus; both write on the construction of sentences, and deserve to be perused; especially Dionysius, who is a very accurate and judicious critic.

I need scarcely recommend the rhetorical writings of Cicero. Whatever, on the subject of eloquence, comes from so great an orator, must be worthy of attention. His most considerable work on this subject is that *De Oratore*, in three books. None of Cicero's writings are more highly finished than this treatise. The dialogue is polite; the characters are well supported, and the conduct of the whole is beautiful and agreeable. It is, indeed, full of digressions, and his rules and observations may be thought sometimes too vague and general. Useful things, however, may be

learned from it; and it is no small benefit to be made acquainted with Cicero's own idea of eloquence. The "*Orator ad M. Brutum*," is also a considerable treatise; and, in general, throughout all Cicero's rhetorical works there run those high and sublime ideas of eloquence, which are fitted both for forming a just taste, and for creating that enthusiasm for the art, which is of the greatest consequence for excelling in it.

But, of all the ancient writers on the subject of oratory, the most instructive, and most useful, is Quintilian. I know few books which abound more with good sense, and discover a greater degree of just and accurate taste, than Quintilian's *Institutions*. Almost all the principles of good criticism are to be found in them. He has digested into excellent order all the ancient ideas concerning rhetoric, and is, at the same time, himself an eloquent writer. Though some parts of his work contain too much of the technical and artificial system then in vogue, and for that reason may be thought dry and tedious, yet I would not advise the omitting to read any part of his *Institutions*. To pleaders at the bar, even these technical parts may prove of some use. Seldom has any person, of more sound and distinct judgment than Quintilian, applied himself to the study of the art of oratory. Blair.

§ 82. *On the Necessity of a Classical Education.*

The fairest diamonds are rough till they are polished, and the purest gold must be run and washed, and sifted in the ore. We are untaught by nature; and the finest qualities will grow wild and degenerate, if the mind is not formed by discipline, and cultivated with an early care. In some persons, who have run up to men without a liberal education, we may observe many great qualities darkened and eclipsed; their minds are crusted over like diamonds in the rock, they flash out sometimes into an irregular greatness of thought, and betray in their actions an unguided force, and unmanaged virtue; something very great and very noble may be discerned, but it looks cumbersome and awkward, and is alone of all things the worst for being natural. Nature is undoubtedly the best mistress and aptest scholar; but nature herself must be civilized, or she will look savage, as she appears in the Indian princes, who are vested with a native majesty, a sur-
prising

prising greatness and generosity of soul, and discover what we always regret, fine parts, and excellent natural endowments, without improvement. In those countries, which we call barbarous, where art and politeness are not understood, nature hath the greater advantage in this, that simplicity of manners often secures the innocence of the mind; and as virtue is not, so neither is vice, civilized and refined: but in these politer parts of the world, where virtue excels by rules and discipline, vice also is more instructed, and with us good qualities will not spring up alone: many hurtful weeds will rise with them, and choke them in their growth, unless removed by some skilful hand: nor will the mind be brought to a just perfection without cherishing every hopeful seed, and repressing every superfluous humour: the mind is like the body in this regard, which cannot fall into a decent and easy carriage, unless it be fashioned in time: an untaught behaviour is like the people that use it, truly rustic, forced and uncouth, and art must be applied to make it natural.

Felton.

§ 83. *On the Entrance to Knowledge.*

Knowledge will not be won without pains and application: some parts of it are easier, some more difficult of access: we must proceed at once by sap and battery; and when the breach is practicable, you have nothing to do, but to press boldly on, and enter: it is troublesome and deep digging for pure waters, but when once you come to the spring, they rise and meet you: the entrance into knowledge is oftentimes very narrow, dark and tiresome, but the rooms are spacious, and gloriously furnished: the country is admirable, and every prospect entertaining. You need not wonder, that fine countries have strait avenues, when the regions of happiness, like those of knowledge, are impervious, and shut to lazy travellers; and the way to heaven itself is narrow.

Common things are easily attained, and no body values what lies in every body's way: what is excellent is placed out of ordinary reach, and you will easily be persuaded to put forth your hand to the utmost stretch, and reach whatever you aspire at.

Ibid.

§ 84. *Classics recommended.*

Many are the subjects which will invite and deserve the steadiest application from

those who would excel, and be distinguished in them. Human learning in general; natural philosophy, mathematics, and the whole circle of science. But there is no necessity of leading you through these several fields of knowledge: it will be most commendable for you to gather some of the fairest fruit from them all, and to lay up a store of good sense, and sound reason, of great probity, and solid virtue. This is the true use of knowledge, to make it subservient to the great duties of our most holy religion, that as you are daily grounded in the true and saving knowledge of a Christian, you may use the helps of human learning, and direct them to their proper end. You will meet with great and wonderful examples of an irregular and mistaken virtue in the Greeks and Romans, with many instances of greatness of mind, of unshaken fidelity, contempt of human grandeur, a most passionate love of their country, prodigality of life, disdain of servitude, inviolable truth, and the most public disinterested souls, that ever threw off all regards in comparison with their country's good: you will discern the flaws and blemishes of their fairest actions, see the wrong apprehensions they had of virtue, and be able to point them right, and keep them within their proper bounds. Under this correction you may extract a generous and noble spirit from the writings and histories of the ancients. And I would in a particular manner recommend the classic authors to your favour, and they will recommend themselves to your approbation.

If you would resolve to master the Greek as well as the Latin tongue, you will find that the one is the source and original of all that is most excellent in the other: I do not mean so much for expression, as thought, though some of the most beautiful strokes of the Latin tongue are drawn from the lines of the Grecian orators and poets; but for thought and fancy, for the very foundation and embellishment of their works, you will see, the Latins have ransacked the Grecian store, and, as Horace advises all who would succeed in writing well, had their authors night and morning in their hands.

And they have been such happy imitators, that the copies have proved more exact than the originals; and Rome has triumphed over Athens, as well in wit as arms; for though Greece may have the honour of invention, yet it is easier to strike out a new course of thought than

than to equal old originals; and therefore it is more honour to surpass, than to invent anew. Verrio is a great man from his own designs; but if he had attempted upon the Cartons, and outdone Raphael Urbin in life and colours, he had been acknowledged greater than that celebrated master, but now we must think him less. *Felton.*

§ 85. *A Comparison of the Greek and Roman Writers.*

If I may detain you with a short comparison of the Greek and Roman authors, I must own the last have the preference in my thoughts; and I am not singular in my opinion. It must be confessed, the Romans have left no tragedies behind them, that may compare with the majesty of the Grecian stage; the best comedies of Rome were written on the Grecian plan, but Menander is too far lost to be compared with Terence; only if we may judge by the method Terence used in forming two Greek plays into one, we shall naturally conclude, since his are perfect upon that model, that they are more perfect than Menander's were. I shall make no great difficulty in preferring Plautus to Aristophanes, for wit and humour, variety of characters, plot and contrivance in his plays, though Horace has censured him for low wit.

Virgil has been so often compared with Homer, and the merits of those poets so often canvassed, that I shall only say, that if the Roman shines not in the Grecian's flame and fire, it is the coolness of his judgment, rather than the want of heat. You will generally find the force of a poet's genius, and the strength of his fancy, display themselves in the descriptions they give of battles, storms, prodigies, &c. and Homer's fire breaks out on these occasions in more dread and terror; but Virgil mixes compassion with his terror, and, by throwing water on the flame, makes it burn the brighter; so in the storm; so in his battles on the fall of Pallas and Camilla; and that scene of horror, which his hero opens in the second book; the burning of Troy; the ghost of Hector; the murder of the king; the massacre of the people; the sudden surprise, and the dead of night, are so relieved by the piety and pity that is every where intermixed, that we forget our fears, and join in the lamentation. All the world acknowledges the *Æneid* to be most perfect in its kind; and considering the disadvantage of the language, and the sever-

ity of the Roman muse, the poem is still more wonderful, since, without the liberty of the Grecian poets, the diction is so great and noble, so clear, so forcible and expressive, so chaste and pure, that even all the strength and compass of the Greek tongue, joined to Homer's fire, cannot give us stronger and clearer ideas, than the great Virgil has set before our eyes; some few instances excepted, in which Homer, thro' the force of genius, has excelled.

I have argued hitherto for Virgil; and it will be no wonder that his poem should be more correct in the rules of writing, if that strange opinion prevails, that Homer writ without any view or design at all; that his poems are loose independent pictures tacked together, and were originally only so many songs or ballads upon the gods and heroes, and the siege of Troy. If this be true, they are the completest string of ballads, I ever met with, and whoever collected them, and put them in the method we now read them in, whether it were Pisistratus, or any other, has placed them in such order, that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* seem to have been composed with one view and design, one scheme and intention, which are carried on from the beginning to the end, all along uniform and consistent with themselves. Some have argued, the world was made by a wise Being, and not jumbled together by chance, from the very absurdity of such a supposition; and they have illustrated their argument, from the impossibility that such a poem as Homer's and Virgil's should rise in such beautiful order out of millions of letters eternally shaken together: but this argument is half spoiled, if we allow, that the poems of Homer, in each of which appears one continued formed design from one end to the other, were written in loose scraps on no settled premeditated scheme. Horace, we are sure, was of another opinion, and so was Virgil too, who built his *Æneid* upon the model of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. After all, Tully, whose relation of this passage has given some colour to this suggestion, says no more, than that Pisistratus (whom he commends for his learning, and condemns for his tyranny) observing the books of Homer to lie confused and out of order, placed them in the method the great author, no doubt, had first formed them in: but all this Tully gives us only as report. And it would be very strange, that Aristotle should form his rules on Homer's poems; that Horace should follow his

his example, and propose Homer for the standard of epic writing, with this bright testimony, that he "never undertook any thing inconsiderately, nor ever made any foolish attempts;" if indeed this celebrated poet did not intend to form his poems in the order and design we see them in. If we look upon the fabric and construction of those great works, we shall find an admirable proportion in all the parts, a perpetual coincidence, and dependence of one upon another; I will venture an appeal to any learned critic in this cause; and if it be a sufficient reason to alter the common readings in a letter, a word, or a phrase, from the consideration of the context, or propriety of the language, and call it the restoring of the text, is it not a demonstration that these poems were made in the same course of lines, and upon the same plan we read them in at present, from all the arguments that connexion, dependence, and regularity can give us? If those critics, who maintain this odd fancy of Homer's writings, had found them loose and undigested, and restored them to the order they stand in now, I believe they would have gloried in their art, and maintained it with more uncontested reasons, than they are able to bring for the discovery of a word or a syllable hitherto falsely printed in the text of any author. But, if any learned men of singular fancies and opinions will not allow these buildings to have been originally designed after the present model, let them at least allow us one poetical supposition on our side, That Homer's harp was as powerful to command his scattered incoherent pieces into the beautiful structure of a poem, as Amphion's was to summon the stones into a wall, or Orpheus's to lead the trees a dance. For certainly, however it happens, the parts are so justly disposed, that you cannot change any book into the place of another, without spoiling the proportion, and confounding the order of the whole.

The Georgics are above all controversy with Hesiod; but the Idylliums of Theocritus have something so inimitably sweet in the verse and thoughts, such a native simplicity, and are so genuine, so natural a result of the rural life, that I must, in my poor judgment, allow him the honour of the pastoral.

In Lyrics the Grecians may seem to have excelled, as undoubtedly they are superior in the number of their poets, and variety

of their verse. Orpheus, Alcaeus, Sappho, Simonides, and Stesichorus are almost entirely lost. Here and there a fragment of some of them is remaining, which, like some broken parts of ancient statues, preserve an imperfect monument of the delicacy, strength, and skill of the great master's hand.

Pindar is sublime, but obscure, impetuous in his course, and unfathomable in the depth and loftiness of his thoughts. Anacreon flows soft and easy, every where diffusing the joy and indolence of his mind through his verse, and tuning his harp to the smooth and pleasant temper of his soul. Horace alone may be compared to both; in whom are reconciled the loftiness and majesty of Pindar, and the gay, careless, jovial temper of Anacreon: and, I suppose, however Pindar may be admired for greatness, and Anacreon for delicateness of thought; Horace, who rivals one in his triumphs, and the other in his mirth and love, surpasses them both in justness, elegance, and happiness of expression. Anacreon has another follower among the choicest wits of Rome, and that is Catullus, whom, though his lines be rough, and his numbers inharmonious, I could recommend for the softness and delicacy, but must decline for the looseness of his thoughts, too immodest for chaste ears to bear.

I will go no farther in the poets; only, for the honour of our country, let me observe to you, that while Rome has been contented to produce some single rivals to the Grecian poetry, England hath brought forth the wonderful Cowley's wit, who was beloved by every muse he courted, and has rivalled the Greek and Latin poets in every kind but tragedy.

I will not trouble you with the historians any further, than to inform you, that the contest lies chiefly between Thucydides and Sallust, Herodotus and Livy; though I think Thucydides and Livy may on many accounts more justly be compared: the critics have been very free in their censures, but I shall be glad to suspend any farther judgment, till you shall be able to read them, and give me your opinion.

Oratory and philosophy are the next disputed prizes; and whatever praises may be justly given to Aristotle, Plato, Xenophon and Demosthenes, I will venture to say, that the divine Tully is all the Grecian orators and philosophers in one. *Felton.*

§ 86. *A short Commendation of the Latin Language.*

And now, having possibly, given you some prejudice in favour of the Romans, I must beg leave to assure you, that if you have not leisure to master both, you will find your pains well rewarded in the Latin tongue, when once you enter into the elegancies and beauties of it. It is the peculiar felicity of that language to speak good sense in suitable expressions; to give the finest thoughts in the happiest words, and in an easy majesty of style, to write up to the subject. "And in this, lies the great secret of writing well. It is that elegant simplicity, that ornamental plainness of speech, which every common genius thinks so plain, that any body may reach it, and findeth so very elegant, that all his sweat, and pains, and study, fail him in the attempt."

In reading the excellent authors of the Roman tongue, whether you converse with poets, orators, or historians, you will meet with all that is admirable in human composition. And though life and spirit, propriety and force of style, be common to them all, you will see that nevertheless every writer shines in his peculiar excellencies; and that wit, like beauty, is diversified into a thousand graces of feature and complexion.

I need not trouble you with a particular character of these celebrated writers. What I have said already, and what I shall say farther of them as I go along, renders it less necessary at present, and I would not pre-engage your opinion implicitly to my side. It will be a pleasant exercise of your judgment to distinguish them yourself; and when you and I shall be able to depart from the common received opinions of the critics and commentators, I may take some other occasion of laying them before you, and submitting what I shall then say of them to your approbation. *Felton.*

§ 87. *Directions in reading the Classics.*

In the mean time, I shall only give you two or three cautions and directions for your reading them, which to some people will look a little odd, but with me they are of great moment, and very necessary to be observed.

The first is, that you would never be persuaded into what they call Common-places; which is a way of taking an au-

thor to pieces, and ranging him under proper heads, that you may readily find what he has said upon any point, by consulting an alphabet. This practice is of no use but in circumstantialis of time and place, custom and antiquity, and in such instances where facts are to be remembered, not where the brain is to be exercised. In these cases it is of great use: it helps the memory, and serves to keep those things in a sort of order and succession. But, common-placing the sense of an author is such a stupid undertaking, that, if I may be indulged in saying it, they want common sense that practise it. What heaps of this rubbish have I seen! O the pains and labour to record what other people have said, that is taken by those who have nothing to say themselves! You may depend upon it, the writings of these men are never worth the reading; the fancy is cramped, the invention spoiled, their thoughts on every thing are prevented, if they think at all; but it is the peculiar happiness of these collectors of sense, that they can write without thinking.

I do most readily agree, that all the bright sparkling thoughts of the ancients, their finest expressions, and noblest sentiments, are to be met with in these transcribers: but how wretchedly are they brought in, how miserably put together! Indeed, I can compare such productions to nothing but rich pieces of patch-work, sewed together with packthread.

When I see a beautiful building of exact order and proportion taken down, and the different materials laid together by themselves, it puts me in mind of these commonplace men. The materials are certainly very good, but they understand not the rules of architecture so well, as to form them into just and masterly proportions any more: and yet how beautiful would they stand in another model upon another plan!

For, we must confess the truth: We can say nothing new, at least we can say nothing better than has been said before; but we may nevertheless make what we say our own. And this is done when we do not trouble ourselves to remember in what page or what book we have read such a passage; but it falls in naturally with the course of our own thoughts, and takes its place in our writings with as much ease, and looks with as good a grace, as it appeared in two thousand years ago.

This is the best way of remembering the ancient authors, when you relish their way

way of writing, enter into their thoughts, and imbibe their sense. There is no need of tying ourselves up to an imitation of any of them; much less to copy or transcribe them. For there is room for vast variety of thought and style; as nature is various in her works, and is nature still. Good authors, like the celebrated masters in the several schools of painting, are originals in their way, and different in their manner. And when we can make the same use of the Romans as they did of the Grecians, and habituate ourselves to their way of thinking and writing, we may be equal in rank, though different from them all, and be esteemed originals as well as they.

And this is what I would have you do. Mix and incorporate with those ancient streams; and though your own wit will be improved and heightened by such a strong infusion, yet the spirit, the thought, the fancy, the expression, which shall flow from your pen, will be entirely your own.

Felton.

§ 88. *The Method of Schools vindicated.*

It has been a long complaint in this polite and excellent age of learning, that we lose our time in words; that the memory of youth is charged and overloaded without improvement; and all they learn is mere cant and jargon for three or four years together. Now, the complaint is in some measure true, but not easily remedied; and perhaps, after all the exclamation of so much time lost in mere words and terms, the hopeful youths, whose loss of time is so much lamented, were capable of learning nothing but words at those years. I do not mind what some quacks in the art of teaching say; they pretend to work wonders, and to make young gentlemen masters of the languages, before they can be masters of common sense; but this to me is a demonstration, that we are capable of little else than words, till twelve or thirteen, if you will observe, that a boy shall be able to repeat his grammar over, two or three years before his understanding opens enough to let him into the reason and clear apprehension of the rules; and when this is done, sooner or later, it ceaseth to be cant and jargon: so that all this clamour is wrong founded, and the cause of complaint lies rather against the backwardness of our judgment, than the method of our schools. And therefore I am for the old way in schools still, and children will be furnished

there with a stock of words at least, when they come to know how to use them.

Ibid.

§ 89. *Commendation of Schools.*

I am very far from having any mean thoughts of those great men who preside in our chiefest and most celebrated schools; it is my happiness to be known to the most eminent of them in a particular manner; and they will acquit me of any disrespect, where they know I have the greatest veneration; for with them the genius of classic learning dwells, and from them it is derived. And I think myself honoured in the acquaintance of some masters in the country, who are not less polite than they are learned, and to the exact knowledge of the Greek and Roman tongues, have joined a true taste, and delicate relish of the classic authors. But should you ever light into some formal hands, though your sense is too fine to relish those pedantries I have been remonstrating against, when you come to understand them, yet for the present they may impose upon you with a grave appearance; and, as learning is commonly managed by such persons, you may think them very learned, because they are very dull: and if you should receive the tincture while you are young, it may sink too deep for all the waters of Helicon to take out. You may be sensible of it, as we are of ill habits, which we regret, but cannot break, and so it may mix with your studies for ever, and give bad colours to every thing you design, whether in speech or writing.

For these meaner critics dress up their entertainments so very ill, that they will spoil your palate, and bring you to a vicious taste. With them, as with disordered stomachs, the finest food and noblest juices turn to nothing but crudities and indigestion. You will have no notion of delicacies, if you table with them; they are all for rank and foul feeding; and spoil the best provisions in the cooking; you must be content to be taught parsimony in sense, and for your most inoffensive food to live upon dry meat and insipid stuff, without any poignancy or relish.

So then these gentlemen will never be able to form your taste or your style; and those who cannot give you a true relish of the best writers in the world, can never instruct you to write like them.

Ibid.

§ 90. *On forming a Style.*

Give me leave to touch this subject, and draw out, for your use, some of the chief strokes, some of the principal lineaments, and fairest features of a just and beautiful style. There is no necessity of being methodical, and I will not entertain you with a dry system upon the matter, but with what you will read with more pleasure, and, I hope, with equal profit, some desultory thoughts in their native order, as they rise in my mind, without being reduced to rules, and marshalled according to art.

To assist you, therefore, as far as art may be an help to nature, I shall proceed to say something of what is required in a finished piece, to make it complete in all its parts, and masterly in the whole.

I would not lay down any impracticable schemes, nor trouble you with a dry formal method: the rule of writing, like that of our duty, is perfect in its kind; but we must make allowances for the infirmities of nature; and since none is without his faults, the most that can be said is, That he is the best writer, against whom the fewest can be alledged.

"A composition is then perfect, when
"the matter rises out of the subject;
"when the thoughts are agreeable to the
"matter, and the expressions suitable to the
"thoughts; where there is no inconsistency
"from the beginning to the end; when
"the whole is perspicuous in the beautiful
"order of its parts, and formed in due
"symmetry and proportion."

Felton.

§ 91. *Expression suited to the Thought.*

In every sprightly genius, the expression will be ever lively as the thoughts. All the danger is, that a wit too fruitful should run out into unnecessary branches; but when it is matured by age, and corrected by judgment, the writer will prune the luxuriant boughs, and cut off the superfluous shoots of fancy, thereby giving both strength and beauty to his work.

Perhaps this piece of discipline is to young writers the greatest self-denial in the world: to confine the fancy, to stifle the birth, much more to throw away the beautiful offspring of the brain, is a trial, that none but the most delicate and lively wits can be put to. It is their praise, that they are obliged to retrench more wit than others have to lavish: the chippings and flings of these jewels could they be pre-

served, are of more value than the whole mass of ordinary authors: and it is a maxim with me, that he has not wit enough, who has not a great deal to spare.

It is by no means necessary for me to run out into the several sorts of writing: we have general rules to judge of all, without being particular upon any, though the style of an orator be different from that of an historian, and a poet's from both.

Ibid.

§ 92. *On Embellishments of Style.*

The design of expression is to convey our thoughts truly and clearly to the world, in such a manner as is most probable to attain the end we propose, in communicating what we have conceived to the public; and therefore men have not thought it enough to write plainly, unless they wrote agreeably, so as to engage the attention, and work upon the affections, as well as inform the understanding of their readers: for which reason, all arts have been invented to make their writings pleasing, as well as profitable; and those arts are very commendable and honest; they are no trick, no delusion, or imposition on the senses and understanding of mankind; for they are founded in nature, and formed upon observing her operations in all the various passions and workings of our minds.

To this we owe all the beauties and embellishments of Style; all figures and schemes of speech, and those several decorations that are used in writings to enliven and adorn the work. The flourishes of fancy resemble the flourishes of the pen in mechanic writers; and the illuminators of manuscripts, and of the press, borrowed their title perhaps from the illumination which a bright genius every where gives to his work, and disperses through his composition.

The commendation of this art of enlightening and adorning a subject, lies in a right distribution of the shades and light. It is in writing, as in picture, in which the art is to observe where the lights will fall, to produce the most beautiful parts to the day, and cast in shades what we cannot hope will shine to advantage.

It were endless to pursue this subject through all the ornaments and illustrations of speech; and yet I would not dismiss it, without pointing at the general rules and necessary qualifications required in those who would attempt to shine in the production of their pen. And therefore

you

you must pardon me if I seem to go back, for we cannot raise any regular and durable pile of building without laying a firm foundation. Felton.

§ 93. *On the first Requisite, a Mastery of Language.*

The first thing requisite to a just style, is a perfect mastery in the language we write in; this is not so easily attained as is commonly imagined, and depends upon a competent knowledge of the force and propriety of words, a good natural taste of strength and delicacy, and all the beauties of expression. It is my own opinion, that all the rules and critical observations in the world will never bring a man to a just style, who has not of himself a natural easy way of writing; but they will improve a good genius, where nature leads the way, provided he is not too scrupulous, and does not make himself a slave to his rules; for that will introduce a stiffness and affectation, which are utterly abhorrent from all good writing.

By a perfect mastery in any language, I understand not only a ready command of words, upon every occasion, not only the force and propriety of words as to their sense and signification, but more especially the purity and idiom of the language; for in this a perfect mastery does consist. It is to know what is English, and what is Latin, what is French, Spanish, or Italian, to be able to mark the bounds of each language we write in, to point out the distinguishing characters, and the peculiar phrases of each tongue; what expressions or manner of expressing is common to any language besides our own, and what is properly and peculiarly our phrase, and way of speaking. For this is to speak or write English, in purity and perfection, to let the streams run clear and unmixed, without taking in other languages in the course: in English, therefore, I would have all Gallicisms (for instance) avoided, that our tongue may be sincere; that we may keep to our own language, and not follow the French mode in our speech, as we do in our cloaths. It is convenient and profitable sometimes to import a foreign word, and naturalize the phrase of another nation, but this is very sparingly to be allowed; and every syllable of foreign growth ought immediately to be discarded, if its use and ornament to our language be not very evident.

§ 94. *On the Purity and Idiom of Language.*

While the Romans studied and used the Greek tongue, only to improve and adorn their own, the Latin flourished, and grew every year more copious, more elegant, and expressive: but in a few years after the ladies and beaux of Rome affected to speak Greek, and regarding nothing but the softness and effeminacy of that noble language, they weakened and corrupted their native tongue; and the monstrous affectation of our travelled ladies and gentlemen to speak in the French air, French tone, French terms, to dress, to cook, to write, to court in French, corrupted at once our language and our manners, and introduced an abominable gallimaufry of French and English mixed together, that made the innovators ridiculous to all men of sense. The French tongue hath undoubtedly its graces and beauties, and I am not against any real improvement of our own language from that or any other: but we are always so foolish, or unfortunate, as never to make any advantage of our neighbours. We affect nothing of theirs, but what is silly and ridiculous; and by neglecting the substantial use of their language, we only enervate and spoil our own.

Languages, like our bodies, are in a perpetual flux, and stand in need of recruits to supply the place of those words that are continually falling off through disuse: and since it is so, I think 'tis better to raise them at home than abroad. We had better rely on our own troops than foreign forces, and I believe we have sufficient strength and numbers within ourselves: there is a vast treasure, an inexhaustible fund in the old English, from whence authors may draw constant supplies, as our officers make their surest recruits from the coal-works, and the mines. The weight, the strength, and significance of many antiquated words, should recommend them to use again. 'Tis only wiping off the rust they have contracted, and separating them from the dross they lie mingled with, and both in value and beauty they will rise above the standard, rather than fall below it.

Perhaps our tongue is not so musical to the ear, nor so abundant in multiplicity of words; but its strength is real, and its words are therefore the more expressive: the peculiar character of our language is, that it is close, compact, and full: and

our writings (if you will excuse two Latin words) come nearest to what Tully means by his *Pressa Oratio*. They are all weight and substance, good measure pressed together, and running over in a redundancy of sense, and not of words. And therefore the purity of our language consists in preserving this character, in writing with the English strength and spirit: let us not envy others, that they are more soft, and diffuse and rarified; be it our commendation to write as we pay, in true Sterling; if we want supplies, we had better revive old words, than create new ones. I look upon our language as good bullion, if we do not debase it with too much alloy; and let me leave this censure with you, That he who corrupteth the purity of the English tongue with the most specious foreign words and phrases, is just as wise as those modish ladies that change their plate for china; for which I think the laudable traffic of old cloaths is much the fairest barter.

Felton.

§ 95. *On Plainness and Perspicuity.*

After this regard to the purity of our language, the next quality of a just style, is its plainness and perspicuity. This is the greatest commendation we can give an author, and the best argument that he is master of the language he writes in, and the subject he writes upon, when we understand him, and see into the scope and tendency of his thoughts, as we read him. All obscurity of expression, and darkness of sense, do arise from the confusion of the writer's thoughts, and his want of proper words. If a man hath not a clear perception of the matter he undertakes to treat of, be his style never so plain as to the words he uses, it never can be clear; and if his thoughts upon this subject be never so just and distinct, unless he has a ready command of words, and a faculty of easy writing in plain obvious expressions, the words will perplex the sense, and cloud the clearness of his thoughts.

It is the unhappiness of some, that they are not able to express themselves clearly: their heads are crowded with a multiplicity of undigested knowledge, which lies confused in the brain, without any order or distinction. It is the vice of others, to affect obscurity in their thoughts and language, to write in a difficult crabbed style, and perplex the reader with an intricate meaning in more intricate words.

The common way of offending against plainness and perspicuity of style, is an affectation of hard unusual words, and of close contracted periods: the faults of pedants and sententious writers; that are vainly ostentations of their learning, or their wisdom. Hard words and quaint expressions are abominable: wherever you meet such a writer, throw him aside for a coxcomb. Some authors of reputation have used a short and concise way of expression, I must own; and if they are not so clear, as others, the fault is to be laid on the brevity they labour after: for while we study to be concise, we can hardly avoid being obscure. We crowd our thoughts into too small a compass, and are so sparing of our words, that we will not afford enow to express our meaning.

There is another extreme in obscure writers, not much taken notice of, which some empty conceited heads are apt to run into out of a prodigality of words, and a want of sense. This is the extravagance of your copious writers, who lose their meaning in the multitude of words, and bury their sense under heaps of phrases. Their understanding is rather rarified than condensed: their meaning, we cannot say, is dark and thick; it is too light and subtle to be discerned: it is spread so thin, and diffused so wide, that it is hard to be collected. Two lines would express all they say in two pages: 'tis nothing but whipt syllabub and froth, a little varnish and gilding, without any solidity or substance.

Ibid.

§ 96. *On the Decorations and Ornaments of Style.*

The deepest rivers have the plainest surface, and the purest waters are always clearest. Chrystal is not the less solid for being transparent; the value of a style rises like the value of precious stones. If it be dark and cloudy, it is in vain to polish it: it bears its worth in its native looks, and the same art which enhances its price when it is clear, only debases it if it be dull.

You see I have borrowed some metaphors to explain my thoughts; and it is, I believe, impossible to describe the plainness and clearness of style, without some expressions clearer than the terms I am otherwise bound up to use.

You must give me leave to go on with you to the decorations and ornaments of style: there is no inconsistency between the plainness and perspicuity, and the ornament of writing. A style resembleth beauty,

beauty, where the face is clear and plain as to symmetry and proportion, but is capable of wonderful improvements, as to features and complexion. If I may transgress in too frequent allusions, because I would make every thing plain to you, I would pass on from painters to statuaries, whose excellence it is at first to form true and just proportions, and afterwards to give them that softness, that expression, that strength and delicacy, which make them almost breathe and live.

The decorations of style are formed out of those several schemes and figures, which are contrived to express the passions and motions of our minds in our speech; to give life and ornament, grace and beauty, to our expressions. I shall not undertake the rhetorician's province, in giving you an account of all the figures they have invented, and those several ornaments of writing, whose grace and commendation lie in being used with judgment and propriety. It were endless to pursue this subject through all the schemes and illustrations of speech: but there are some common forms, which every writer upon every subject may use, to enliven and adorn his work.

These are metaphor and similitude; and those images and representations, that are drawn in the strongest and most lively colours, to imprint what the writer would have his readers conceive, more deeply on their minds. In the choice, and in the use of these, your ordinary writers are most apt to offend. Images are very sparingly to be introduced: their proper place is in poems and orations; and their use is to move pity or terror, admiration, compassion, anger and resentment, by representing something very affectionate or very dreadful, very astonishing, very miserable, or very provoking, to our thoughts. They give a wonderful force and beauty to the subject, where they are painted by a masterly hand; but if they are either weakly drawn, or unskilfully placed, they raise no passion but indignation in the reader.

Felton.

§ 97. On Metaphors and Similitudes.

The most common ornaments are Metaphor and Similitude. One is an allusion to words, the other to things; and both have their beauties, if properly applied.

Similitudes ought to be drawn from the most familiar and best known particulars

in the world: if any thing is dark and obscure in them, the purpose of using them is defeated; and that which is not clear itself, can never give light to any thing that wants it. It is the idle fancy of some poor brains, to run out perpetually into a course of similitudes, confounding their subject by the multitude of likenesses; and making it like so many things, that it is like nothing at all. This trifling humour is good for nothing, but to convince us, that the author is in the dark himself; and while he is likening his subject to every thing, he knoweth not what it is like.

There is another tedious fault in some simile men; which is, drawing their comparisons into a great length and minute particulars, where it is of no importance whether the resemblance holds or not. But the true art of illustrating any subject by similitude, is, first to pitch on such a resemblance as all the world will agree in: and then, without being careful to have it run on all four, to touch it only in the strongest lines and the nearest likeness. And this will secure us from all stiffness and formality in similitude, and deliver us from the nauseous repetition of *as* and *so*, which some so-so writers, if I may beg leave to call them so, are continually sounding in our ears.

I have nothing to say to those gentlemen who bring similitudes and forget the resemblance. All the pleasure we can take when we meet these promising sparks, is in the disappointment, where we find their fancy is so like their subject, that it is not like at all. *Ibid.*

§ 98. On Metaphors.

Metaphors require great judgment and consideration in the use of them. They are a shorter similitude, where the likeness is rather implied than expressed. The signification of one word, in metaphor, is transferred to another, and we talk of one thing in the terms and propriety of another. But there must be a common resemblance, some original likeness in nature, some correspondence and easy transition, or metaphors are shocking and confused.

The beauty of them displays itself in their easiness and propriety, where they are naturally introduced; but where they are forced and crowded, too frequent and various, and do not rise out of the course of thought, but are constrained and pressed into the service, instead of making the discourse

course more lively and chearful, they make it sullen, dull, and gloomy.

You must form your judgment upon the best models and the most celebrated pens, where you will find the metaphor in all its grace and strength, shedding a lustre and beauty on the work. For it ought never to be used but when it gives greater force to the sentence, an illustration to the thought, and insinuates a silent argument in the allusion. The use of metaphors is not only to convey the thought in a more pleasing manner, but to give it a stronger impression, and enforce it on the mind. Where this is not regarded, they are vain and trifling trash; and in a due observance of this, in a pure, chaste, natural expression, consist the justness, beauty, and delicacy of style.

Felton,

§ 99. *On Epithets.*

I have said nothing of Epithets. Their business is to express the nature of the things they are applied to; and the choice of them depends upon a good judgment, to distinguish what are the most proper titles to be given on all occasions, and a complete knowledge in the accidents, qualities, and affections of every thing in the world. They are of most ornament when they are of use: they are to determine the character of every person, and decide the merits of every cause; conscience and justice are to be regarded, and great skill and exactness are required in the use of them. For it is of great importance to call things by their right names: the points of satire, and strains of compliment depend upon it: otherwise we may make an ass of a lion, commend a man in satire, and lampoon him in panegyric. Here also there is room for genius: common justice and judgment should direct us to say what is proper at least; but it is parts and fire that will prompt us to the most lively and most forcible epithets that can be applied; and 'tis in their energy and propriety their beauty lies.

Ibid.

§ 100. *On Allegories.*

Allegories I need not mention, because they are not so much any ornament of style, as an artful way of recommending truth to the world in a borrowed shape, and a dress more agreeably to the fancy, than naked truth herself can be. Truth is ever most beautiful and evident in her native dress: and the arts that are used to convey her to our minds, are no argument

that she is deficient, but so many testimonies of the corruption of our nature, when truth, of all things the plainest and sincerest, is forced to gain admittance to us in disguise, and court us in masquerade.

Ibid.

§ 101. *On the Sublime.*

There is one ingredient more required to the perfection of style, which I have partly mentioned already, in speaking of the suitableness of the thoughts to the subject, and of the words to the thoughts; but you will give me leave to consider it in another light, with regard to the majesty and dignity of the subject.

It is fit, as we have said already, that the thoughts and expressions should be suited to the matter on all occasions; but in nobler and greater subjects, especially where the theme is sacred and divine, it must be our care to think and write up to the dignity and majesty of the things we presume to treat of: nothing little, mean, or low, no childish thoughts, or boyish expressions, will be endured: all must be awful and grave, and great and solemn. The noblest sentiments must be conveyed in the weightiest words: all ornaments and illustrations must be borrowed from the richest parts of universal nature; and in divine subjects, especially when we attempt to speak of God, of his wisdom, goodness, and power, of his mercy and justice, of his dispensations and providence (by all which he is pleased to manifest himself to the sons of men) we must raise our thoughts, and enlarge our minds, and search all the treasures of knowledge for every thing that is great, wonderful, and magnificent: we can only express our thoughts of the Creator in the works of his creation; and the brightest of these can only give us some faint shadows of his greatness and his glory. The strongest figures are too weak, the most exalted language too low, to express his ineffable excellence. No hyperbole can be brought to heighten our thoughts; for in so sublime a theme, nothing can be hyperbolical.

The riches of imagination are poor, and all the rivers of eloquence are dry, in supplying thought on an infinite subject. How poor and mean, how base and grovelling, are the Heathen conceptions of the Deity! something sublime and noble must needs be said on so great an occasion; but in this great article, the most celebrated of the Heathen pens seem to flag

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and sink; they bear up in no proportion to the dignity of the theme, as if they were depressed by the weight, and dazzled with the splendour of the subject.

We have no instances to produce of any writers that rise at all to the majesty and dignity of the Divine Attributes except the sacred penmen. No less than Divine Inspiration could enable men to write worthily of God, and none but the Spirit of God knew how to express his greatness, and display his glory: in comparison of these divine writers, the greatest geniuses, the noblest wits of the Heathen world, are low and dull. The sublime majesty and royal magnificence of the scripture poems are above the reach, and beyond the power of all mortal wit. Take the best and liveliest poems of antiquity, and read them as we do the scriptures, in a prose translation, and they are flat and poor. Horace, and Virgil, and Homer, lose their spirits and their strength in the transposition, to that degree, that we have hardly patience to read them. But the sacred writings, even in our translation, preserve their majesty and their glory, and very far surpass the brightest and noblest compositions of Greece and Rome. And this is not owing to the richness and solemnity of the eastern eloquence (for it holds in no other instance) but to the divine direction and assistance of the holy writers. For, let me only make this remark, that the most literal translation of the scriptures, in the most natural signification of the words, is generally the best; and the same punctualness, which debases other writings, preserves the spirit and majesty of the sacred text: it can suffer no improvement from human wit; and we may observe that those who have presumed to heighten the expressions by a poetical translation or paraphrase, have sunk in the attempt; and all the decorations of their verse, whether Greek or Latin, have not been able to reach the dignity, the majesty, and solemnity of our prose: so that the prose of scripture cannot be improved by verse, and even the divine poetry is most like itself in prose. One observation more I would leave with you: Milton himself, as great a genius as he was, owes his superiority over Homer and Virgil, in majesty of thought and splendour of expression, to the scriptures: they are the fountain from which he derived his light; the sacred treasure that enriched his fancy, and furnished him with all the truth and wonders of God and his

creation, of angels and men, which no mortal brain was able either to discover or conceive: and in him, of all human writers, you will meet all his sentiments and words raised and suited to the greatness and dignity of the subject.

I have detained you the longer on this majesty of style, being perhaps myself carried away with the greatness and pleasure of the contemplation. What I have dwelt so much on with respect to divine subjects, is more easily to be observed with reference to human: for in all things below divinity, we are rather able to exceed than fall short; and in adorning all other subjects, our words and sentiments may rise in a just proportion to them: nothing is above the reach of man, but heaven; and the same wit can raise a human subject, that only debases a divine. *Felton.*

§ 102. *Rules of Order and Proportion.*

After all these excellencies of style, in purity, in plainness and perspicuity, in ornament and majesty, are considered, a finished piece of what kind soever must shine in the order and proportion of the whole; for light rises out of order, and beauty from proportion. In architecture and painting, these fill and relieve the eye. A just disposition gives us a clear view of the whole at once; and the due symmetry and proportion of every part in itself, and of all together, leave no vacancy in our thoughts or eyes; nothing is wanting, every thing is complete, and we are satisfied in beholding.

But when I speak of order and proportion, I do not intend any stiff and formal method, but only a proper distribution of the parts in general, where they follow in a natural course, and are not confounded with one another. Laying down a scheme, and marking out the divisions and subdivisions of a discourse, are only necessary in systems, and some pieces of controversy and argumentation: you see, however, that I have ventured to write without any declared order; and this is allowable, where the method opens as you read, and the order discovers itself in the progress of the subject; but certainly, of all pieces that were ever written in a professed and stated method, and distinguished by the number and succession of their parts, our English sermons are the completest in order and proportion; the method is so easy and natural, the parts bear so just a proportion to one another, that among many

others, this may pass for a peculiar commendation of them; for those divisions and particulars which obscure and perplex other writings, give a clearer light to ours. All that I would insinuate, therefore, is only this, that it is not necessary to lay the method we use before the reader, only to write and then he will read, in order.

But it requires a full command of the subject, a distinct view, to keep it always in sight, or else, without some method first designed, we should be in danger of losing it, and wandering after it, till we have lost ourselves, and bewildered the reader.

A prescribed method is necessary for weaker heads, but the beauty of order is its freedom and unconstraint: it must be dispersed and shine in all the parts through the whole performance; but there is no necessity of writing in trammels, when we can move more at ease without them: neither is the proportion of writing to be measured out like the proportions of a horse, where every part must be drawn in the minutest respect to the size and bigness of the rest; but it is to be taken by the mind, and formed upon a general view and consideration of the whole. The statuary that carves Hercules in stone, or casts him in brass, may be obliged to take his dimensions from his foot; but the poet that describes him is not bound up to the geometer's rule: nor is an author under any obligation to write by the scale.

These hints will serve to give you some notion of order and proportion: and I must not dwell too long upon them, lest I transgress the rules I am laying down.

Felton.

§ 103. *A Recapitulation.*

I shall make no formal recapitulation of what I have delivered. Out of all these rules together, rises a just style, and a perfect composition. All the latitude that can be admitted, is in the ornament of writing; we do not require every author to shine in gold and jewels: there is a moderation to be used in the pomp and trappings of a discourse: it is not necessary that every part should be embellished and adorned; but the decoration should be skilfully distributed through the whole: too full and glaring a light is offensive, and confounds the eyes: in heaven itself there are vacancies and spaces between the stars; and the day is not less beautiful for being interspersed with clouds; they only moderate the brightness of the sun, and, without di-

minishing from his splendour, gild and adorn themselves with his rays. But to descend from the skies: It is in writing as in dress; the richest habits are not always the completest, and a gentleman may make a better figure in a plain suit, than in an embroidered coat; the dress depends upon the imagination, but must be adjusted by the judgment, contrary to the opinion of the ladies, who value nothing but a good fancy in the choice of their cloaths. The first excellence is to write in purity, plainly, and clearly; there is no dispensation from these: but afterwards you have your choice of colours, and may enliven, adorn, and paint your subject as you please.

In writing, the rules have a relation and dependance on one another. They are held in one social bond, and joined, like the moral virtues, and liberal arts, in a sort of harmony and concord. He that cannot write pure, plain English, must never pretend to write at all; it is in vain for him to dress and adorn his discourse; the finer he endeavours to make it, he makes it only the more ridiculous. And on the other side, let a man write in the exactest purity and propriety of language, if he has not life and fire, to give his work some force and spirit, it is nothing but a mere corpse, and a lumpish, unwieldy mass of matter. But every true genius, who is perfect master of the language he writes in, will let no fitting ornaments and decorations be wanting. His fancy flows in the richest vein, and gives his pieces such lively colours, and so beautiful a complexion, that you would almost say his own blood and spirits were transfused into the work.

Ibid.

§ 104. *How to form a right Taste.*

A perfect mastery and elegance of style is to be learned from the common rules, but must be improved by reading the orators, and poets, and the celebrated masters in every kind; this will give you a right taste, and a true relish; and when you can distinguish the beauties of every finished piece, you will write yourself with equal commendation.

I do not assert that every good writer must have a genius for poetry; I know Tully is an undeniable exception: but I will venture to affirm, that a soul that is not moved with poetry, and has no taste that way, is too dull and lumpish ever to write with any prospect of being read. It is a fatal mistake, and simple superstition,

to discourage youth from poetry, and endeavour to prejudice them against it; if they are of a poetical genius, there is no restraining them: Ovid, you know, was deaf to his father's frequent admonitions. But if they are not quite smitten and bewitched with love of verse, they should be trained to it, to make them masters of every kind of poetry, that by learning to imitate the originals, they may arrive at a right conception, and a true taste of their authors: and being able to write in verse upon occasion, I can assure you, is no disadvantage to prose; for without relishing the one, a man must never pretend to any taste of the other.

Taste is a metaphor, borrowed from the palate, by which we approve or dislike what we eat and drink, from the agreeableness or disagreeableness of the relish in our mouth. Nature directs us in the common use, and every body can tell sweet from bitter, what is sharp, or sour, or vapid, or nauseous; but it requires senses more refined and exercised, to discover every taste that is most perfect in its kind; every palate is not a judge of that, and yet drinking is more used than reading. All that I pretend to know of the matter, is, that wine should be, like a style, clear, deep, bright, and strong, sincere and pure, sound and dry (as our advertisements do well express it) which last is a commendable term, that contains the juice of the richest spirits, and only keeps out all cold and dampness.

It is common to commend a man for an ear to music, and a taste of painting; which are nothing but a just discernment of what is excellent and most perfect in them. The first depends entirely on the ear; a man can never expect to be a master, that has not an ear tuned and set to music; and you can no more sing an ode without an ear, than without a genius you can write one. Painting, we should think, requires some understanding in the art, and exact knowledge of the best master's manner, to be a judge of it; but this faculty, like the rest, is founded in nature: knowledge in the art, and frequent conversation with the best originals, will certainly perfect a man's judgment; but if there is not a natural sagacity and aptness, experience will be of no great service. A good taste is an argument of a great soul, as well as a lively wit. It is the infirmity of poor spirits to be taken with every appearance, and dazzled by every thing that sparkles:

but to pass by what the generality of the world admires, and to be detained with nothing but what is most perfect and excellent in its kind, speaks a superior genius, and a true discernment: a new picture by some meaner hand, where the colours are fresh and lively, will engage the eye, but the pleasure goes off with looking, and what we ran to at first with eagerness, we presently leave with indifference; but the old pieces of Raphael, Michael Angelo, Tintoret, and Titian, though not so inviting at first, open to the eye by degrees; and the longer and oftener we look, we still discover new beauties, and find new pleasure. I am not a man of so much severity in my temper, as to allow you to be pleased with nothing but what is in the last perfection; for then, possibly, so many are the infirmities of writing, beyond other arts, you could never be pleased. There is a wide difference in being nice to judge of every degree of perfection, and rigid in refusing whatever is deficient in any point. This would only be weakness of stomach, not any commendation of a good palate; a true taste judges of defects as well as perfections, and the best judges are always the persons of the greatest candour. They will find none but real faults, and whatever they commend, the praise is justly due.

I have intimated already, that a good taste is to be formed by reading the best authors; and when you shall be able to point out their beauties, to discern the brightest passages, the strength and elegance of their language, you will always write yourself, and read others by that standard, and must therefore necessarily excel.

Felton.

§ 105. *Taste to be improved by Imitation.*

In Rome there were some popular orators, who, with a false eloquence and violent action, carried away the applause of the people: and with us we have some popular men, who are followed and admired for the loudness of their voice, and a false pathos both in utterance and writing. I have been sometimes in some confusion to hear such persons commended by those of superior sense, who could distinguish, one would think, between empty, pompous, specious harangues, and those pieces in which all the beauties of writing are combined. A natural taste must therefore be improved, like fine parts, and a great genius; it must be assisted by art, or it

it will be easily vitiated and corrupted. False eloquence passes only where true is not understood; and nobody will commend bad writers, that is acquainted with good.

These are only some cursory thoughts on a subject that will not be reduced to rules. To treat of a true taste in a formal method, would be very insipid; it is best collected from the beauties and laws of writing, and must rise from every man's own apprehension and notion of what he hears and reads.

It may be therefore of farther use, and most advantage to you, as well as a relief and entertainment to refresh your spirits in the end of a tedious discourse, if besides mentioning the classic authors as they fall in my way, I lay before you some of the correctest writers of this age and the last, in several faculties, upon different subjects: Not that you should be drawn into a servile imitation of any of them: but that you may see into the spirit, force, and beauty of them all, and form your pen from those general notions of life and delicacy, of fine thoughts and happy words, which rise to your mind upon reading the great masters of style in their several ways, and manner of excelling.

I must beg leave, therefore, to defer a little the entertainment I promised, while I endeavour to lead you into the true way of imitation, if ever you shall propose any original for your copy; or, which is infinitely preferable, into a perfect mastery of the spirit and perfections of every celebrated writer, whether ancient or modern.

Felton.

§ 106. *On the Historical Style.*

History will not admit those decorations other subjects are capable of; the passions and affections are not to be moved with anything, but the truth of the narration. All the force and beauty must lie in the order and expression. To relate every event with clearness and perspicuity, in such words as best express the nature of the subject, is the chief commendation of an historian's style. History gives us a draught of facts and transactions in the world. The colours these are painted in; the strength and significancy of the several faces; the regular confusion of a battle; the distractions of tumult sensibly depicted; every object and every occurrence so presented to your view, that while you read, you seem indeed to see them: this is

the art and perfection of an historical style. And you will observe, that those who have excelled in history, have excelled in this especially; and what has made them the standards of that style, is the clearness, the life and vigour of their expression, every where properly varied, according to the variety of the subjects they wrote on: for history and narration are nothing but just and lively descriptions of remarkable events and accidents.

Ibid.

§ 107. *Of HERODOTUS and THUCYDIDES.*

For this reason we praise Herodotus and Thucydides among the Greeks, for I will mention no more of them; and upon this account we commend Sallust and Livy among the Romans. For though they all differ in their style, yet they all agree in these common excellencies. Herodotus displays a natural oratory in the beauty and clearness of a numerous and solemn diction; he flows with a sedate and majestic pace, with an easy current, and a pleasant stream. Thucydides does sometimes write in a style so close, that almost every word is a sentence, and every sentence almost acquaints us with something new; so that from the multitude of causes, and variety of matter crowded together; we should suspect him to be obscure: but yet so happy, so admirable a master is he in the art of expression, so proper and so full, that we cannot say whether his diction does more illustrate the things he speaks of, or whether his words themselves are not illustrated by his matter, so mutual a light do his expressions and subject reflect on each other. His diction, though it be pressed and close, is nevertheless great and magnificent, equal to the dignity and importance of his subject. He first, after Herodotus, ventured to adorn the historian's style, to make the narration more pleasing, by leaving the flatness and nakedness of former ages. This is most observable in his battles, where he does not only relate the mere fight, but writes with a martial spirit, as if he stood in the hottest of the engagement; and what is most excellent as well as remarkable in so close a style, is, that it is numerous and harmonious, that his words are not laboured nor forced, but fall into their places in a natural order, as into their most proper situation. *Ibid.*

§ 108. *Of SALLUST and LIVY.*

Sallust and Livy, you will read, I hope, with

with so much pleasure, as to make a thorough and intimate acquaintance with them. Thucydides and Sallust are generally compared, as Livy is with Herodotus; and, since I am fallen upon their characters, I cannot help touching the comparisons. Sallust is represented as a concise, a strong, and nervous writer; and so far he agrees with Thucydides's manner: but he is also charged with being obscure, as concise writers very often are, without any reason. For, if I may judge by my own apprehensions, as I read him, no writer can be more clear, more obvious and intelligible. He has not, indeed, as far as I can observe, one redundant expression; but his words are all weighed and chosen, so expressive and significant, that I will challenge any critic to take a sentence of his, and express it clearer or better; his contraction seems wrought and laboured. To me he appears as a man that considered and studied perspicuity and brevity to that degree, that he would not retrench a word which might help him to express his meaning, nor suffer one to stand, if his sense was clear without it. Being more diffuse, would have weakened his language, and have made it obscurer rather than clearer: for a multitude of words only serve to cloud or dissipate the sense; and though a copious style in a master's hand is clear and beautiful, yet where conciseness and perspicuity are once reconciled, any attempt to enlarge the expressions, if it does not darken, does certainly make the light much feebler. Sallust is all life and spirit, yet grave and majestic in his diction: his use of old words is perfectly right: there is no affectation, but more weight and significancy in them: the boldness of his metaphors are among his greatest beauties; they are chosen with great judgment, and shew the force of his genius; the colouring is strong, and the strokes are bold: and in my opinion he chose them for the sake of the brevity he loved, to express more clearly and more forcibly, what otherwise he must have written in looser characters with less strength and beauty. And no fault can be objected to the justest and exactest of the Roman writers.

Livy is the most considerable of the Roman historians, if to the perfection of his style we join the compass of his subject; in which he has the advantage over all that wrote before him, in any nation but the Jewish, especially over Thucydides;

whose history, however drawn out into length, is confined to the shortest period of any, except what remains of Sallust. No historian could be happier in the greatness and dignity of his subject, and none was better qualified to adorn it; for his genius was equal to the majesty of the Roman empire, and every way capable of the mighty undertaking. He is not so copious in words, as abundant in matter, rich in his expression, grave, majestic, and lively; and if I may have liberty to enlarge on the old commendation, I would say his style flows with milk and honey, in such abundance, such pleasure and sweetness, that when once you are proficient enough to read him readily, you will go on with unwearied delight, and never lay him out of your hands without impatience to resume him. We may resemble him to Herodotus, in the manner of his diction; but he is more like Thucydides in the grandeur and majesty of expression; and if we observe the multitude of clauses in the length of the periods, perhaps Thucydides himself is not more crowded; only the length of his periods is apt to deceive us; and great men among the ancients, as well as moderns, have been induced to think this writer was copious, because his sentences were long. Copious he is indeed, and forcible in his descriptions, not lavish in the number, but exuberant in the richness and significancy of his words. You will observe, for I speak upon my own observation, that Livy is not so easy and obvious to be understood as Sallust; the experiment is made every where in reading five or six pages of each author together. The shortness of Sallust's sentences, as long as they are clear, shews his sense and meaning all the way in an instant: the progress is quick and plain, and every three lines gives us a new and complete idea; we are carried from one thing to another with so swift a pace, that we run as we read, and yet cannot, if we read distinctly, run faster than we understand him. This is the brightest testimony that can be given of a clear and obvious style. In Livy we cannot pass on so readily; we are forced to wait for his meaning till we come to the end of the sentence, and have so many clauses to sort and refer to their proper places in the way, that I must own I cannot read him so readily at sight as I can Sallust; though with attention and consideration I understand him as well. He is not so easy, nor so well adapted to young

young proficient, as the other: and is ever plainest, when his sentences are shortest; which I think is a demonstration. Some perhaps, will be apt to conclude, that in this I differ from Quintilian; but I do not conceive so myself; for Quintilian recommends Livy before Sallust, rather for his candour, and the larger compass of his history; for he owns a good proficiency is required to understand him; and I can only refer to the experience of young proficient, which of them is more open to their apprehension. Distinction of sentences, in few words, provided the words be plain and expressive, ever gives light to the author, and carries his meaning uppermost; but long periods, and a multiplicity of clauses, however they abound with the most obvious and significant words, do necessarily make the meaning more retired, less forward and obvious to the view: and in this Livy may seem as crowded as Thucydides, if not in the number of periods, certainly in the multitude of clauses, which, so disposed, do rather obscure than illuminate his writings. But in so rich, so majestic, so flowing a writer, we may wait with patience to the end of the sentence, for the pleasure still increases as we read. The elegance and purity, the greatness, the nobleness of his diction, his happiness in narration, and his wonderful eloquence, are above all commendation; and his style, if we were to decide, is certainly the standard of Roman history. For Sallust, I must own, is too impetuous in his course; he hurries his reader on too fast, and hardly ever allows him the pleasure of expectation, which in reading history, where it is justly raised on important events, is the greatest of all others. *Felton.*

§ 109. *Their Use in Style.*

Reading these celebrated authors will give you a true taste of good writing, and form you to a just and correct style upon every occasion that shall demand your pen. I would not recommend any of them to a strict imitation; that is servile and mean; and you cannot propose an exact copy of a pattern, without falling short of the original: but if you once read them with a true relish and discernment of their beauties, you may lay them aside, and be secure of writing with all the graces of them all, without owing your perfection to any. Your style and manner will be your own, and even your letters upon the most ordinary subjects, will have a native beauty

and elegance in the composition, which will equal them with the best originals, and set them far above the common standard.

Upon this occasion, I cannot pass by your favourite author, the grave and facetious Tatler, who has drawn mankind in every dress, and every disguise of nature, in a style ever varying with the humours, fancies, and follies he describes. He has shewed himself a master in every turn of his pen, whether his subject be light or serious, and has laid down the rules of common life with so much judgment, in such agreeable, such lively and elegant language, that from him you at once may form your manners and your style. *Ibid.*

§ 110. *On SPENSER and SHAKESPEAR.*

I may add some poets of more ancient date: and though their style is out of the standard now, there are in them still some lines so extremely beautiful, that our modern language cannot reach them. Chaucer is too old, I fear; but Spenser, though he be antiquated too, hath still charms remaining to make you enamoured of him. His antique verse has music in it to ravish any ears, that can be sensible of the softest, sweetest numbers, that ever flowed from a poet's pen.

Shakespear is a wonderful genius, a single instance of the force of nature and the strength of wit. Nothing can be greater and more lively than his thoughts; nothing nobler and more forcible than his expression. The fire of his fancy breaks out into his words, and sets his reader on a flame: he makes the blood run cold or warm; and is so admirable a master of the passions, that he raises your courage, your pity, and your fear, at his pleasure; but he delights most in terror. *Ibid.*

§ 111. *On MILTON and PHILIPS.*

Milton is the assertor of poetic liberty, and would have freed us from the bondage of rhyme, but, like sinners, and like lovers, we hug our chain, and are pleased in being slaves. Some indeed have made some faint attempts to break it, but their verse had all the softness and effeminacy of rhyme without the music; and Dryden himself, who sometimes struggled to get loose, always relapsed, and was faster bound than ever: but rhyme was his province, and he could make the tinkling of his chains harmonious. Mr. Philips has trod the nearest in his great master's steps, and

and has equalled him in his verse more than he falls below him in the compass and dignity of his subject. The Shilling is truly splendid in his lines, and his poems will live longer than the unfinished castle, as long as Blenheim is remembered, or Cyder drank in England. But I have digressed from Milton; and that I may return, and say all in a word; his style, his thoughts, his verse, are as superior to the generality of other poets, as his subject.

Felton.

§ 112. *Great Men have usually appeared at the same time.*

It is a remarkable phenomenon, and one which has often employed the speculations of curious men, that writers and artists, most distinguished for their parts and genius, have generally appeared in considerable numbers at a time. Some ages have been remarkably barren in them; while, at other periods, Nature seems to have exerted herself with a more than ordinary effort, and to have poured them forth with a profuse fertility. Various reasons have been assigned for this. Some of the moral causes lie obvious; such as favourable circumstances of government and of manners; encouragement from great men; emulation excited among the men of genius. But as these have been thought inadequate to the whole effect, physical causes have been also assigned; and the Abbé du Bos, in his reflections on Poetry and Painting, has collected a great many observations on the influence which the air, the climate, and other such natural causes, may be supposed to have upon genius. But whatever the causes be, the fact is certain, that there have been certain periods or ages of the world much more distinguished than others, for the extraordinary productions of genius.

Blair.

§ 113. *Four of these Ages marked out by the Learned.*

Learned men have marked out four of these happy ages. The first is the Grecian age, which commenced near the time of the Peloponnesian war, and extended till the time of Alexander the Great; within which period, we have Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Æschines, Lyfias, Isocrates, Pindar, Æschylus, Euripides, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Menander, Anacreon, Theocritus, Lysippas, Apelles, Phidias, Praxiteles. The second is the Ro-

man age, included nearly within the days of Julius Cæsar and Augustus; affording us, Catullus, Lucretius, Terence, Virgil, Horace, Tibullus, Propertius, Ovid, Phædrus, Cæsar, Cicero, Livy, Sallust, Varro, and Vitruvius. The third age is, that of the restoration of learning, under the Popes Julius II. and Leo X.; when flourished Ariosto, Tasso, Sannazarius, Vida, Machiavel, Guicciardini, Davila, Erasmus, Paul Jovius, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Titian. The fourth, comprehends the age of Louis XIV. and Queen Anne; when flourished, in France, Corneille, Racine, De Retz, Moliere, Boileau, Fontaine, Baptiste, Rouffeau, Bossuet, Fenelon, Bourdaloue, Pascal, Malebranche, Massillon, Bruyere, Bayle, Fontenelle, Vertot; and in England, Dryden, Pope, Addison, Prior, Swift, Parnell, Congreve, Otway, Young, Rowe, Atterbury, Shaftsbury, Bolingbroke, Tillotson, Temple, Boyle, Locke, Newton, Clarke.

Ibid.

§ 114. *The Reputation of the Ancients established too firmly to be shaken.*

If any one, at this day, in the eighteenth century, takes upon him to decry the ancient Classics; if he pretends to have discovered that Homer and Virgil are poets of inconsiderable merit, and that Demosthenes and Cicero are not great Orators, we may boldly venture to tell such a man, that he is come too late with his discovery. The reputation of such writers is established upon a foundation too solid to be now shaken by any arguments whatever; for it is established upon the almost universal taste of mankind, proved and tried throughout the succession of so many ages. Imperfections in their works he may indeed point out; passages that are faulty he may shew; for where is the human work that is perfect? But if he attempts to discredit their works in general, or to prove that the reputation which they have gained is on the whole unjust, there is an argument against him, which is equal to full demonstration. He must be in the wrong; for human nature is against him. In matters of taste, such as poetry and oratory, to whom does the appeal lie? where is the standard? and where the authority of the last decision? where is it to be looked for, but as I formerly shewed, in those feelings and sentiments that are found, on the most extensive examination, to be the common sentiments and feelings of men? These have been fully consulted on this head,

head. The Public, the unprejudiced Public, has been tried and appealed to for many centuries, and throughout almost all civilized nations. It has pronounced its verdict; it has given its sanction to these writers; and from this tribunal there lies no farther appeal.

In matters of mere reasoning, the world may be long in an error; and may be convinced of the error by stronger reasonings, when produced. Positions that depend upon science, upon knowledge, and matters of fact, may be overturned according as science and knowledge are enlarged, and new matters of fact are brought to light. For this reason, a system of philosophy receives no sufficient sanction from its antiquity, or long currency. The world, as it grows older, may be justly expected to become, if not wiser, at least more knowing; and supposing it doubtful whether Aristotle, or Newton, were the greater genius, yet Newton's philosophy may prevail over Aristotle's, by means of later discoveries, to which Aristotle was a stranger. But nothing of this kind holds as to matters of Taste; which depend not on the progress of knowledge and science, but upon sentiment and feeling. It is in vain to think of undeceiving mankind, with respect to errors committed here, as in Philosophy. For the universal feeling of mankind is the natural feeling; and because it is the natural, it is, for that reason, the right feeling. The reputation of the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid* must therefore stand upon sure ground, because it has stood so long; though that of the Aristotelian or Platonic philosophy, every one is at liberty to call in question. *Blair.*

§ 115. *The Reputation of the Ancients not owing to Pedantry.*

It is in vain also to alledge, that the reputation of the ancient poets and orators, is owing to authority, to pedantry, and to the prejudices of education, transmitted from age to age. These, it is true, are the authors put into our hands at schools and colleges, and by that means we have now an early prepossession in their favour; but how came they to gain the possession of colleges and schools? Plainly, by the high fame which these authors had among their own contemporaries. For the Greek and Latin were not always dead languages. There was a time, when Homer, and Virgil, and Horace, were viewed in the same light as we now view Dryden, Pope, and Ad-

dison. It is not to commentators and universities, that the classics are indebted for their fame. They became classics and school-books in consequence of the high admiration which was paid them by the best judges in their own country and nation. As early as the days of Juvenal, who wrote under the reign of Domitian, we find Virgil and Horace become the standard books in the education of youth.

Quod stabant pueri, cum totus decolor esset
Flaccus, & hæeret nigro fuligo Maroni.

SAT. 7.

From this general principle, then, of the reputation of great ancient Classics being so early, so lasting, so extensive, among all the most polished nations, we may justly and boldly infer, that their reputation cannot be wholly unjust, but must have a solid foundation in the merit of their writings.

Ibid.

§ 116. *In what Respects the Moderns excel the Ancients.*

Let us guard, however, against a blind and implicit veneration for the Ancients in every thing. I have opened the general principle, which must go far in instituting a fair comparison between them and the Moderns. Whatever superiority the Ancients may have had in point of genius, yet in all arts, where the natural progress of knowledge has had room to produce any considerable effects, the Moderns cannot but have some advantage. The world may, in certain respects, be considered as a person, who must needs gain somewhat by advancing in years. Its improvements have not, I confess, been always in proportion to the centuries that have passed over it; for, during the course of some ages, it has sunk as into a total lethargy. Yet when roused from that lethargy, it has generally been able to avail itself, more or less, of former discoveries. At intervals, there arose some happy genius, who could both improve on what had gone before, and invent something new. With the advantage of a proper stock of materials, an inferior genius can make greater progress

"Then thou art bound to smell, on either
"hand,
"As many stinking lamps as school-boys
"stand,
"When Horace could not read in his own
"sully'd book,
"And Virgil's sacred page was all besmen'd
"with smoke." *DARWIN.*

than

than a much superior one, to whom these materials are wanting.

Hence, in Natural Philosophy, Astronomy, Chemistry, and other sciences that depend on an extensive knowledge and observation of facts, modern philosophers have an unquestionable superiority over the ancient. I am inclined also to think, that in matters of pure reasoning, there is more precision among the moderns, than in some instances there was among the ancients; owing perhaps to a more extensive literary intercourse, which has improved and sharpened the faculties of men. In some studies too, that relate to taste and fine writing, which is our object, the progress of society must, in equity, be admitted to have given us some advantages. For instance, in history; there is certainly more political knowledge in several European nations at present, than there was in ancient Greece and Rome. We are better acquainted with the nature of government, because we have seen it under a greater variety of forms and revolutions. The world is more laid open than it was in former times; commerce is greatly enlarged; more countries are civilized; posts are every where established; intercourse is become more easy; and the knowledge of facts, by consequence, more attainable. All these are great advantages to historians; of which, in some measure, as I shall afterwards shew, they have availed themselves. In the more complex kinds of poetry, likewise, we may have gained somewhat, perhaps, in point of regularity and accuracy. In dramatic performances, having the advantage of the ancient models, we may be allowed to have made some improvements in the variety of the characters, the conduct of the plot, attentions to probability, and to decorums.

Blair.

§ 117. *We must look to the Ancients for elegant Composition, and to the Moderns for accurate Philosophy.*

From whatever cause it happens, so it is, that among some of the ancient writers, we must look for the highest models in most of the kinds of elegant composition. For accurate thinking and enlarged ideas, in several parts of philosophy, to the moderns we ought chiefly to have recourse. Of correct and finished writing in some works of taste, they may afford useful patterns; but for all that belongs to original genius, to spirited, masterly, and high execution, our best and most happy ideas are,

generally speaking, drawn from the ancients. In epic poetry, for instance, Homer and Virgil, to this day, stand not within many degrees of any rival. Orators, such as Cicero and Demosthenes, we have none. In history, notwithstanding some defects, which I am afterwards to mention in the ancient historical plans, it may be safely asserted, that we have no such historical narration, so elegant, so picturesque, so animated, and interesting as that of Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Livy, Tacitus, and Sallust. Although the conduct of the drama may be admitted to have received some improvements, yet for poetry and sentiment, we have nothing to equal Sophocles and Euripides; nor any dialogue in comedy, that comes up to the correct, graceful, and elegant simplicity of Terence. We have no such love-elegies as those of Tibullus; no such pastorals as some of Theocritus's; and for Lyric poetry, Horace stands quite unrivalled. The name of Horace cannot be mentioned without a particular encomium. That "curiosa felicitas," which Petronius has remarked in his expression; the sweetness, elegance, and spirit of many of his odes, the thorough knowledge of the world, the excellent sentiments, and natural easy manner which distinguish his Satires and Epistles, all contribute to render him one of those very few authors whom one never tires of reading; and from whom alone, were every other monument destroyed, we should be led to form a very high idea of the taste and genius of the Augustan age. *Ibid.*

§ 118. *The assiduous Study of the Greek and Roman Classics recommended.*

To all such then, as wish to form their taste, and nourish their genius, let me warmly recommend the assiduous study of the ancient classics, both Greek and Roman.

Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurna.

Without a considerable acquaintance with them, no man can be reckoned a polite scholar; and he will want many assistances for writing and speaking well, which the knowledge of such authors would afford him. Any one has great reason to suspect his own taste, who receives little or no pleasure from the perusal of writings, which so many ages and nations have consented

* "Read them by day, and study them by night."

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in holding up as subjects of admiration. And I am persuaded, it will be found, that in proportion as the ancients are generally studied and admired, or are unknown and disregarded in any country, good taste and good composition will flourish, or decline. They are commonly none but the ignorant or superficial, who undervalue them.

Blair.

§ 119. *The ancient Historians excel in picturesque Narration.*

In all the virtues of narration, particularly in that of picturesque descriptive narration, several of the ancient historians eminently excel. Hence, the pleasure that is found in reading Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Livy, Sallust, and Tacitus. They are all conspicuous for the art of narration. Herodotus is, at all times, an agreeable writer, and relates every thing with that *aisiôs* and simplicity of manner, which never fails to interest the reader. Though the manner of Thucydides be more dry and harsh, yet, on great occasions, as when he is giving an account of the plague of Athens, the siege of Platæa, the sedition in Corcyra, the defeat of the Athenians in Sicily, he displays a very strong and masterly power of description. Xenophon's *Cyropædia*, and his *Anabasis*, or retreat of the ten thousand, are extremely beautiful. The circumstances are finely selected, and the narration is easy and engaging; but his *Hellenics*, or continuation of the history of Thucydides, is a much inferior work. Sallust's art of historical painting in his *Catilinarian*, but, more especially, in his *Jugurthine* war, is well known; though his style is liable to censure, as too studied and affected.

Ibid.

§ 120. *Livy remarkable for Historical Painting.*

Livy is more unexceptionable in his manner; and is excelled by no historian whatever in the art of narration: several remarkable examples might be given from him. His account, for instance, of the famous defeat of the Roman army by the Samnites, at the *Furcæ Caudinæ*, in the beginning of the ninth book, affords one of the most beautiful exemplifications of historical painting, that is any where to be met with. We have first, an exact description of the narrow pass between two mountains, into which the enemy had decoyed the Romans. When they find them-

selves caught, and no hope of escape left, we are made to see, first, their astonishment, next, their indignation, and then, their dejection, painted in the most lively manner, by such circumstances and actions as were natural to persons in their situation. The restless and unquiet manner in which they pass the night; the consultations of the Samnites; the various measures proposed to be taken; the messages between the two armies, all heighten the scene. At length, in the morning, the consuls return to the camp, and inform them that they could receive no other terms but that of surrendering their arms, and passing under the yoke, which was considered as the last mark of ignominy for a conquered army.

Ibid.

§ 121. *Tacitus remarkable for Historical Painting.*

Tacitus is another author eminent for historical painting, though in a manner altogether different from that of Livy. Livy's descriptions are more full, more plain, and natural; those of Tacitus consist in a few bold strokes. He selects one or two remarkable circumstances, and sets them before us in a strong, and, generally, in a new and uncommon light. Such is the following picture of the situation of Rome, and of the Emperor Galba, when Otho was advancing against him: "*Agg-batur huc illoc Galba, vario turbæ fluctuantis impulsu, completis undique basilicis et templis, lugubri prospectu. Neque populi aut plebis ulla vox; sed attoniti vultus, et conversæ ad omnia aures. Non tumultus, non quies; sed quale magni merûs, et magnæ iræ, silentium est.*" No image, in any poet, is more strong and expressive than this last stroke of the description: "*Non tumultus, non quies, sed quale,*" &c. This is a conception of the sublime kind, and discovers high genius. Indeed, throughout all his work, Tacitus shews the hand of a master. As he is profound in reflection, so he is striking in description, and pathetic in sentiment. The philosopher, the poet, and

* "Galba was driven to and fro by the tide of the multitude, showing him from place to place. The temples and public buildings were filled with crowds, of a dismal appearance. No clamours were heard, either from the citizens, or from the rabble. Their countenances were filled with consternation; their ears were employed in listening with anxiety. It was not a tumult; it was not quietness; it was the silence of terror, and of wrath."

the historian, all meet in him. Though the period of which he writes may be reckoned unfortunate for an historian, he has made it afford us many interesting exhibitions of human nature. The relations which he gives of the deaths of several eminent personages, are as affecting as the deepest tragedies. He paints with a glowing pencil; and possesses, beyond all writers, the talent of painting, not to the imagination merely, but to the heart. With many of the most distinguished beauties, he is, at the same time, not a perfect model for history; and such as have formed themselves upon him, have seldom been successful. He is to be admired, rather than imitated. In his reflections he is too refined; in his style too concise, sometimes quaint and affected, often abrupt and obscure. History seems to require a more natural, flowing, and popular manner.

Blair.

§ 122. *On the Beauty of Epistolary Writing.*

Its first and fundamental requisite is, to be natural and simple; for a stiff and laboured manner is as bad in a letter, as it is in conversation. This does not banish sprightliness and wit. These are graceful in letters, just as they are in conversation; when they flow easily, and without being studied; when employed so as to season, not to cloy. One who, either in conversation or in letters, affects to shine and to sparkle always, will not please long. The style of letters should not be too highly polished. It ought to be neat and correct, but no more. All nicety about words, betrays study; and hence musical periods, and appearances of number and harmony in arrangement, should be carefully avoided in letters. The best letters are commonly such as the authors have written with most facility. What the heart or the imagination dictates, always flows readily; but where there is no subject to warm or interest these, constraint appears; and hence, those letters of mere compliment, congratulation, or affected condolence, which have cost the authors most labour in composing, and which, for that reason, they perhaps consider as their master-pieces, never fail of being the most disagreeable and insipid to the readers.

Ibid.

§ 123. *Ease in writing Letters must not degenerate to carelessness.*

It ought, at the same time, to be remembered, that the ease and simplicity which

I have recommended in epistolary correspondence, are not to be understood as importing entire carelessness. In writing to the most intimate friend, a certain degree of attention, both to the subject and the style, is requisite and becoming. It is no more than what we owe both to ourselves, and to the friend with whom we correspond. A slovenly and negligent manner of writing, is a disobliging mark of want of respect. The liberty, besides, of writing letters with too careless a hand, is apt to betray persons into imprudence in what they write. The first requisite, both in conversation and correspondence, is to attend to all the proper decorums which our own character, and that of others, demand. An imprudent expression in conversation may be forgotten and pass away; but when we take the pen into our hand, we must remember, that "*Litera scripta manet.*"

Ibid.

§ 124. *On PLINY'S Letters.*

Pliny's letters are one of the most celebrated collections which the ancients have given us, in the epistolary way. They are elegant and polite; and exhibit a very pleasing and amiable view of the author. But, according to the vulgar phrase, they smell too much of the lamp. They are too elegant and fine; and it is not easy to avoid thinking, that the author is casting an eye towards the Public, when he is appearing to write only for his friends. Nothing indeed is more difficult, than for an author, who publishes his own letters, to divest himself altogether of attention to the opinion of the world in what he says; by which means, he becomes much less agreeable than a man of parts would be, if, without any constraint of this sort, he were writing to his intimate friend.

Ibid.

§ 125. *On CICERO'S Letters.*

Cicero's Epistles, though not so showy as those of Pliny, are, on several accounts, a far more valuable collection; indeed, the most valuable collection of letters extant in any language. They are letters of real business, written to the wisest men of the age, composed with purity and elegance, but without the least affectation; and, what adds greatly to their merit, written without any intention of being published to the world. For it appears that Cicero never kept copies of his own letters; and we are wholly indebted to the care of his freed-man Tyro, for the large collection that was

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made, after his death, of those which are now extant, amounting to near a thousand *. They contain the most authentic materials of the history of that age; and are the last monuments which remain of Rome in its free state; the greatest part of them being written during that important crisis, when the republic was on the point of ruin; the most interesting situation, perhaps, which is to be found in the affairs of mankind. To his intimate friends, especially to Atticus, Cicero lays open himself and his heart, with entire freedom. In the course of his correspondence with others, we are introduced into acquaintance with several of the principal personages of Rome; and it is remarkable that most of Cicero's correspondents, as well as himself, are elegant and polite writers; which serves to heighten our idea of the taste and manners of that age.

Blair.

§ 126. On POPE's and SWIFT's Letters.

The most distinguished collection of letters in the English language, is that of Mr. Pope, Dean Swift, and their friends; partly published in Mr. Pope's works, and partly in those of Dean Swift. This collection is, on the whole, an entertaining and agreeable one; and contains much wit and ingenuity. It is not, however, altogether free of the fault which I imputed to Pliny's Epistles, of too much study and refinement. In the variety of letters from different persons, contained in that collection, we find many that are written with ease, and a beautiful simplicity. Those of Dr. Arbuthnot, in particular, always deserve that praise. Dean Swift's also are unaffected; and as a proof of their being so, they exhibit his character fully, with all its defects; though it were to be wished, for the honour of his memory, that his epistolary correspondence had not been drained to the dregs, by so many successive publications, as have been given to the world. Several of Lord Bolingbroke's, and of Bishop Atterbury's Letters, are masterly. The censure of writing letters in too artificial a manner, falls heaviest on Mr. Pope himself. There is visibly more study, and less of nature and the heart in his letters, than in those of some of his correspondents. He had formed himself on the manner of Voi-

ture, and is too fond of writing like a wit. His letters to ladies are full of affectation. Even in writing to his friends, how forced an introduction is the following, of a letter to Mr. Addison: "I am more joyed at your return, than I should be at that of the Sun, as much as I wish for him in this melancholy wet season; but it is his fate too, like yours, to be displeasing to owls and obscene animals, who cannot bear his lustre." How stiff a compliment is it, which he pays to Bishop Atterbury: "Though the noise and daily bustle for the Public be now over, I dare say, you are still tendering its welfare; as the Sun in winter, when seeming to retire from the world, is preparing warmth and benedictions for a better season." This sentence might be tolerated in an harangue; but is very unsuitable to the style of one friend corresponding with another.

Ibid.

§ 127. On the Letters of BALZAC, VOITURE, SEVIGNÉ, and Lady MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE.

The gaiety and vivacity of the French genius appear to much advantage in their letters, and have given birth to several agreeable publications. In the last age, Balzac and Voiture were the two most celebrated epistolary writers. Balzac's reputation indeed soon declined, on account of his swelling periods and pompous style. But Voiture continued long a favourite author. His composition is extremely sparkling; he shows a great deal of wit, and can trifle in the most entertaining manner. His only fault is, that he is too open and professed a wit, to be thoroughly agreeable as a letter-writer. The letters of Madame de Sevigné are now esteemed the most accomplished model of a familiar correspondence. They turn indeed very much upon trifles, the incidents of the day, and the news of the town; and they are overloaded with extravagant compliments, and expressions of fondness, to her favourite daughter; but withal, they shew such perpetual sprightliness, they contain such easy and varied narration, and so many strokes of the most lively and beautiful painting, perfectly free from any affectation, that they are justly entitled to high praise. The Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montague are not unworthy of being named after those of Mad. de Sevigné. They have much of the French ease and vivacity, and retain more the character of agreeable epistolary

* See his Letter to Atticus, which was written a year or two before his death, in which he tells him, in answer to some enquiries concerning his epistles, that he had no collection of them, and that Tyro had only about seventy of them.

epistolary style, than perhaps any letters which have appeared in the English language.

Blair.

§ 128. *Lyric Poetry. On PINDAR.*

Pindar, the great father of lyric poetry, has been the occasion of leading his imitators into some defects. His genius was sublime; his expressions are beautiful and happy; his descriptions picturesque. But finding it a very barren subject to sing the praises of those who had gained the prize in the public games, he is perpetually digressive, and fills up his poems with fables of the gods and heroes, that have little connection either with his subject, or with one another. The ancients admired him greatly; but as many of the histories of particular families and cities, to which he alludes, are now unknown to us, he is so obscure, partly from his subjects, and partly from his rapid, abrupt manner of treating them, that, notwithstanding the beauty of his expression, our pleasure in reading him is much diminished. One would imagine, that many of his modern imitators thought the best way to catch his spirit, was to imitate his disorder and obscurity. In several of the choruses of Euripides and Sophocles, we have the same kind of lyric poetry as in Pindar, carried on with more clearness and connection, and at the same time with much sublimity.

Ibid.

§ 129. *On HORACE, as a Lyric Poet.*

Of all the writers of odes, ancient or modern, there is none that, in point of correctness, harmony, and happy expression, can vie with Horace. He has descended from the Pindaric rapture to a more moderate degree of elevation; and joins connected thought, and good sense, with the highest beauties of poetry. He does not often aspire beyond that middle region, which I mentioned as belonging to the ode; and those odes, in which he attempts the sublime, are perhaps not always his best*. The peculiar character, in which he excels, is grace and elegance;

* There is no ode whatever of Horace's, without great beauties. But though I may be singular in my opinion, I cannot help thinking that in some of those odes which have been much admired for sublimity (such as Ode iv. Lib. iv. "Quislem ministrum fulminis alterum, &c.") there appears somewhat of a strained and forced effort to be lofty. The genius of this amiable poet shews itself, according to my judgment, to greater advantage, in themes of a more temperate kind.

and in this style of composition, no poet has ever attained to a greater perfection than Horace. No poet supports a moral sentiment with more dignity, touches a gay one more happily, or possesses the art of trifling more agreeably, when he chuses to trifle. His language is so fortunate, that with a single word or epithet, he often conveys a whole description to the fancy. Hence he ever has been, and ever will continue to be, a favourite author with all persons of taste.

Ibid.

§ 130. *On CASIMIR, and other modern Lyric Poets.*

Among the Latin poets of later ages, there have been many imitators of Horace. One of the most distinguished is Casimir, a Polish poet of the last century, who wrote four books of odes. In graceful ease of expression, he is far inferior to the Roman. He oftener affects the sublime; and in the attempt, like other lyric writers, frequently becomes harsh and unnatural. But, on several occasions, he discovers a considerable degree of original genius, and poetical fire. Buchanan, in some of his lyric compositions, is very elegant and classical.

Among the French, the odes of Jean Baptiste Rousseau have been much and justly celebrated. They possess great beauty, both of sentiment and expression. They are animated, without being rhapsodical; and are not inferior to any poetical productions in the French language.

In our own language, we have several lyric compositions of considerable merit. Dryden's Ode on St. Cecilia, is well known. Mr. Grey is distinguished in some of his odes, both for tenderness and sublimity; and in Dodley's Miscellanies, several very beautiful lyric poems are to be found. As to professed Pindaric odes, they are, with a few exceptions, so incoherent, as seldom to be intelligible. Cowley, at all times harsh, is doubly so in his Pindaric compositions. In his Anacreontic odes, he is much happier. They are smooth and elegant; and, indeed, the most agreeable and the most perfect, in their kind, of all Mr. Cowley's poems.

Ibid.

§ 131. *On the different Kinds of Poetical Composition in the Sacred Books; and of the distinguishing Characters of the chief Writers. 1st. Of the Didactic.*

The several kinds of poetical composition which we find in scripture, are chiefly the

didactic, elegiac, pastoral, and lyric. Of the didactic species of poetry, the Book of Proverbs is the principal instance. The nine first chapters of that book are highly poetical, adorned with many distinguished graces, and figures of expression. At the 10th chapter, the style is sensibly altered, and descends into a lower strain, which is continued to the end; retaining however that sententious, pointed manner, and that artful construction of period, which distinguishes all the Hebrew poetry. The Book of Ecclesiastes comes likewise under this head; and some of the Psalms, as the 119th in particular. *Blair.*

§ 132. *Of the Elegiac and Pastoral Poetry of Scripture.*

Of elegiac poetry, many very beautiful specimens occur in Scripture; such as the lamentation of David over his friend Jonathan; several passages in the prophetic books; and several of David's Psalms, composed on occasions of distress and mourning. The 42d Psalm, in particular, is, in the highest degree, tender and plaintive. But the most regular and perfect elegiac composition in the Scripture, perhaps in the whole world, is the book, entitled the Lamentations of Jeremiah. As the prophet mourns in that book over the destruction of the Temple, and the Holy City, and the overthrow of the whole state, he assembles all the affecting images which a subject so melancholy could suggest. The composition is uncommonly artificial. By turns the prophet, and the city of Jerusalem, are introduced, as pouring forth their sorrows; and in the end, a chorus of the people send up the most earnest and plaintive supplications to God. The lines of the original too, as may, in part, appear from our translation, are longer than is usual in the other kinds of Hebrew poetry; and the melody is rendered thereby more flowing, and better adapted to the querimonious strain of elegy.

The Song of Solomon affords us a high exemplification of pastoral poetry. Considered with respect to its spiritual meaning, it is undoubtedly a mystical allegory; in its form, it is a dramatic pastoral, or a perpetual dialogue between personages in the character of shepherds: and, suitably to that form, it is full of rural and pastoral images, from beginning to end. *Ibid.*

§ 133. *On the Lyric Poetry of Scripture.*

Of lyric poetry, or that which is inten-

ded to be accompanied with music, the Old Testament is full. Besides a great number of hymns and songs, which we find scattered in the historical and prophetic books, such as the song of Moses, the song of Deborah, and many others of like nature, the whole book of Psalms is to be considered as a collection of sacred odes. In these, we find the ode exhibited in all the varieties of its form, and supported with the highest spirit of lyric poetry; sometimes sprightly, cheerful, and triumphant; sometimes solemn and magnificent; sometimes tender and soft. From these instances, it clearly appears, that there are contained in the holy scriptures full exemplifications of several of the chief kinds of poetical writing. *Ibid.*

§ 134. *A Diversity of Style and Manner in the different Composers of the Sacred Books. On JOB, DAVID, and ISAIAH.*

Among the different composers of the sacred books, there is an evident diversity of style and manner; and to trace their different characters in this view, will contribute not a little towards our reading their writings with greater advantage. The most eminent of the sacred poets are, the author of the Book of Job, David, and Isaiah. As the compositions of David are of the lyric kind, there is a greater variety of style and manner in his works, than in those of the other two. The manner in which, considered merely as a poet, David chiefly excels, is the pleasing, the soft, and the tender. In his Psalms, there are many lofty and sublime passages; but, in strength of description, he yields to Job; in sublimity, he yields to Isaiah. It is a sort of temperate grandeur, for which David is chiefly distinguished; and to this he always soon returns, when, upon some occasions, he rises above it. The psalms in which he touches us most, are those in which he describes the happiness of the righteous, or the goodness of God; expresses the tender breathings of a devout mind, or sends up moving and affectionate supplications to heaven. Isaiah is, without exception, the most sublime of all poets. This is abundantly visible in our translation; and, what is a material circumstance, none of the books of scripture appear to have been more happily translated than the writings of this prophet. Majesty is his reigning character; a majesty more commanding, and more uniformly supported, than is to be found among the rest of the

the Old Testament poets. He possesses, indeed, a dignity and grandeur, both in his conceptions and expressions, which are altogether unparalleled, and peculiar to himself. There is more clearness and order too, and a more visible distribution of parts, in his book, than in any other of the prophetic writings. *Blair.*

§ 135. *On JEREMIAH.*

When we compare him with the rest of the poetical prophets, we immediately see in Jeremiah a very different genius. Isaiah employs himself generally on magnificent subjects. Jeremiah seldom discovers any disposition to be sublime, and inclines always to the tender and elegiac. Ezekiel, in poetical grace and elegance, is much inferior to them both; but he is distinguished by a character of uncommon force and ardour. To use the elegant expressions of Bishop Lowth, with regard to this Prophet: "Est atrox, vehemens, tragicus; in sensibus, fervidus, acerbus; indignabundus; in imaginibus, secundus, truculentus, et nonnunquam penè deformis; in dictione, grandiloquus, gravis, austerus, et interdum incultus; frequens in repetitionibus, non decoris aut gratiæ causa, sed ex indignatione et violentia. Quicquid suscepit tractandum, id seculò persequitur; in eo unice hæret defixus; a proposito raro desistens. In cæteris, a plerisque vatibus fortasse superatus; sed in eo genere, ad quod videtur a natura unice comparatus, nimirum, vi, pondere, impetu, granditate, nemo unquam eum superavit." The same learned writer compares Isaiah to Homer, Jeremiah to Simonides, and Ezekiel to Æschylus. Most of the book of Isaiah is strictly poetical; of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, not above one half can be held to belong to poetry. Among the minor prophets, Hosea, Joel, Micah, Habakkuk, and especially Nahum, are distinguished for poetical spirit. In the prophecies of Daniel and Jonah, there is no poetry.

Ibid.

§ 136. *On the Book of Job.*

It only now remains to speak of the book of Job. It is known to be extremely ancient; generally reputed the most ancient of all the poetical books; the author uncertain. It is remarkable, that this book has no connection with the affairs or manners of the Jews, or Hebrews. The scene is laid in the land of Uz, or Idumæa,

which is a part of Arabia; and the imagery employed is generally of a different kind, from what I before shewed to be peculiar to the Hebrew poets. We meet with no allusions to the great events of sacred history, to the religious rites of the Jews, to Lebanon or to Carmel, or any of the peculiarities of the climate of Judæa. We find few comparisons founded on rivers or torrents; these were not familiar objects in Arabia. But the longest comparison that occurs in the book, is to an object frequent and well known in that region, a brook that fails in the season of heat, and disappoints the expectation of the traveller.

The poetry, however, of the book of Job, is not only equal to that of any other of the sacred writings, but is superior to them all, except those of Isaiah alone. As Isaiah is the most sublime, David the most pleasing and tender, so Job is the most descriptive, of all the inspired poets. A peculiar glow of fancy, and strength of description, characterise the author. No writer whatever abounds so much in metaphors. He may be said, not to describe, but to render visible, whatever he treats of. A variety of instances might be given. Let us remark only those strong and lively colours, with which, in the following passages, taken from the 18th and 20th chapters of his book, he paints the condition of the wicked; observe how rapidly his figures rise before us; and what a deep impression, at the same time, they leave on the imagination. "Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon the earth, that the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite, but for a moment? Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach the clouds, yet he shall perish for ever. He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found; yea, he shall be chased away, as a vision of the night. The eye also which saw him, shall see him no more; they which have seen him, shall say, where is he?—He shall suck the poison of asps, the viper's tongue shall slay him. In the fulness of his sufficiency, he shall be in straits; every hand shall come upon him. He shall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him through. All darkness shall be hid in his secret places. A fire not blown shall consume him. The heaven shall reveal his iniquity, and the earth shall rise up against him. The increase of his house shall depart,

"depart. His goods shall flow away in
 "the day of wrath. The light of the
 "wicked shall be put out; the light shall
 "be dark in his tabernacle. The steps
 "of his strength shall be straitened, and
 "his own counsel shall cast him down.
 "For he is cast into a net, by his own
 "feet. He walketh upon a snare. Ter-
 "rors shall make him afraid on every side;
 "and the robber shall prevail against him.
 "Brimstone shall be scattered upon his
 "habitation. His remembrance shall pe-
 "rish from the earth, and he shall have
 "no name in the street. He shall be dri-
 "ven from light into darkness. They
 "that come after him shall be astonished
 "at his day. He shall drink of the wrath
 "of the Almighty."

Blair.

§ 137. *On the Iliad of HOMER.*

The subject of the Iliad must unquestionably be admitted to be, in the main, happily chosen. In the days of Homer, no object could be more splendid and dignified than the Trojan war. So great a confederacy of the Grecian states, under one leader, and the ten years siege which they carried on against Troy, must have spread far abroad the renown of many military exploits, and interested all Greece in the traditions concerning the heroes who had most eminently signalized themselves. Upon these traditions, Homer grounded his poem; and though he lived, as is generally believed, only two or three centuries after the Trojan war, yet, through the want of written records, tradition must, by his time, have fallen into the degree of obscurity most proper for poetry; and have left him at full liberty to mix as much fable as he pleased, with the remains of true history. He has not chosen, for his subject, the whole Trojan war; but, with great judgment, he has selected one part of it, the quarrel betwixt Achilles and Agamemnon, and the events to which that quarrel gave rise; which, though they take up forty-seven days only, yet include the most interesting, and most critical period of the war. By this management, he has given greater unity to what would have otherwise been an unconnected history of battles. He has gained one hero, or principal character, Achilles, who reigns throughout the work; and he has shewn the pernicious effect of discord among confederated princes. At the same time, I admit that Homer is less fortunate in his subject than Virgil. The plan of the

Aeneid includes a greater compass and a more agreeable diversity of events; whereas the Iliad is almost entirely filled with battles.

The praise of high invention has in every age been given to Homer, with the greatest reason. The prodigious number of incidents, of speeches, of characters divine and human, with which he abounds; the surprising variety with which he has diversified his battles, in the wounds and deaths, and little history-pieces of almost all the persons slain, discover an invention next to boundless. But the praise of judgment is, in my opinion, no less due to Homer, than that of invention. His story is all along conducted with great art. He rises upon us gradually; his heroes are brought out, one after another, to be objects of our attention. The distress thickens, as the poem advances; and every thing is so contrived as to aggrandize Achilles, and to render him, as the poet intended he should be, the capital figure.

But that wherein Homer excels all writers, is the characteristical part. Here, he is without a rival. His lively and spirited exhibition of characters, is, in a great measure, owing to his being so dramatic a writer, abounding every where with dialogue and conversation. There is much more dialogue in Homer than in Virgil; or, indeed, than in any other poet.

Ibid.

§ 138. *On the Odyssey of HOMER.*

My observations, hitherto, have been made upon the Iliad only. It is necessary to take some notice of the Odyssey also. Longinus's criticism upon it is not without foundation, that Homer may, in this poem, be compared to the setting sun, whose grandeur still remains, without the heat of his meridian beams. It wants the vigour and sublimity of the Iliad; yet, at the same time, possesses so many beauties, as to be justly entitled to high praise. It is a very amusing poem, and has much greater variety than the Iliad; it contains many interesting stories; and beautiful descriptions. We see every where the same descriptive and dramatic genius, and the same fertility of invention, that appears in the other work. It descends, indeed from the dignity of gods, and heroes, and warlike achievements; but in recompence, we have more pleasing pictures of ancient manners. Instead of that ferocity which reigns in the Iliad, the Odyssey presents us with the most

most amiable images of hospitality and humanity; entertains us with many a wonderful adventure, and many a landscape of nature; and instructs us by a constant vein of morality and virtue, which runs through the poem.

Blair.

§ 139. *On the Beauties of VIRGIL.*

Virgil possesses beauties which have justly drawn the admiration of ages, and which, to this day, hold the balance in equilibrium between his fame and that of Homer. The principal and distinguishing excellency of Virgil, and which, in my opinion he possesses beyond all poets, is tenderness. Nature had endowed him with exquisite sensibility; he felt every affecting circumstance in the scenes he describes; and, by a single stroke, he knows how to reach the heart. This, in an epic poem, is the merit next to sublimity; and puts it in an author's power to render his composition extremely interesting to all readers.

The chief beauty of this kind, in the *Iliad*, is the interview of Hector with Andromache. But, in the *Æneid*, there are many such. The second book is one of the greatest master-pieces that ever was executed by any hand; and Virgil seems to have put forth there the whole strength of his genius, as the subject afforded a variety of scenes, both of the awful and tender kind. The images of horror, presented by a city burned and sacked in the night, are finely mixed with pathetic and affecting incidents. Nothing, in any poet, is more beautifully described than the death of old Priam; and the family-pieces of *Æneas*, *Anchises*, and *Creusa*, are as tender as can be conceived. In many passages of the *Æneid*, the same pathetic spirit shines; and they have been always the favourite passages in that work. The fourth book, for instance, relating the unhappy passion and death of *Dido*, has been always most justly admired, and abounds with beauties of the highest kind. The interview of *Æneas* with *Andromache* and *Helenus*, in the third book; the episodes of *Pallas* and *Evander*, of *Nisus* and *Euryalus*, of *Lausus* and *Mezentius*, in the Italian wars, are all striking instances of the poet's power of raising the tender emotions. For we must observe, that though the *Æneid* be an unequal poem, and, in some places, languid, yet there are beauties scattered through it all; and not a few, even in the last six books. The best

and most finished books, upon the whole, are the first, the second, the fourth, the sixth, the seventh, the eighth, and the twelfth.

Ibid.

§ 140. *On the comparative Merit of HOMER and VIRGIL.*

Upon the whole, as to the comparative merit of those two great princes of epic poetry, Homer and Virgil; the former must undoubtedly be admitted to be the greater genius; the latter, to be the more correct writer. Homer was an original in his art, and discovers both the beauties and the defects, which are to be expected in an original author, compared with those who succeed him; more boldness, more nature and ease, more sublimity and force; but greater irregularities and negligences in composition. Virgil has, all along, kept his eye upon Homer; in many places he has not so much imitated, as he has literally translated him. The description of the storm, for instance, in the first *Æneid*, and *Æneas's* speech upon that occasion, are translations from the fifth book of the *Odyssey*; not to mention almost all the similes of Virgil, which are no other than copies of those of Homer. The pre-eminence in invention, therefore, must, beyond doubt, be ascribed to Homer. As to the pre-eminence in judgment, though many critics are disposed to give it to Virgil, yet, in my opinion, it hangs doubtful. In Homer, we discern all the Greek vivacity; in Virgil, all the Roman stateliness. Homer's imagination is by much the most rich and copious; Virgil's the most chaste and correct. The strength of the former lies, in his power of warming the fancy; that of the latter, in his power of touching the heart. Homer's style is more simple and animated; Virgil's more elegant and uniform. The first has, on many occasions, a sublimity to which the latter never attains; but the latter, in return, never sinks below a certain degree of epic dignity, which cannot so clearly be pronounced of the former. Not, however, to detract from the admiration due to both these great poets, most of Homer's defects may reasonably be imputed, not to his genius, but to the manners of the age in which he lived; and for the feeble passages of the *Æneid*, this excuse ought to be admitted, that the *Æneid* was left an unfinished work.

Ibid.

To the admirers of polite learning, the *Lectures* of Dr. Blair, at large, are strongly recommended,

mended. The Extracts in this book are designed only as specimens of that elegant and useful work, and for the use of *Schoolboys*. It would be unjust, and indeed impracticable, to give any more Extracts, consistently with the necessary limits prescribed to this book.

§ 141. *On the Ancient Writers; and on the Labour with which the Ancients composed.*

The Ancients (of whom we speak) had good natural parts, and applied them right; they understood their own strength, and were masters of the subject they undertook; they had a rich genius carefully cultivated; in their writings you have nature without wildness, and art without ostentation. For it is vain to talk of nature and genius, without care and diligent application to refine and improve them. The finest paradise will run wild, and lose both its pleasure and usefulness, without a skilful hand constantly to tend and prune it. Though these generous spirits were inspired with the love of true praise, and had a modest assurance of their own abilities; yet they were not so self-sufficient, as to imagine their first thoughts were above their own review and correction, or their last above the judgment of their friends. They submitted their compositions to the censure of private persons and public assemblies. They reviewed, altered, and polished, till they had good hopes they could present the world with a finished piece. And so great and happy was their judgment, that they understood when they had done well, and knew the critical season of laying aside the file.

For, as those excellent masters, Pliny and Quintilian, observe, there may be an intemperance in correction; when an ingenious man has such an excess of modesty and faulty distrust of himself, that he wears off some of the necessary and ornamental parts of his discourse, instead of polishing the rough, and taking off the superfluous.

These immortal wits did not preposterously resolve first to be authors, and then immediately fall to writing without study and experience; but took care to furnish themselves with knowledge by close thought, select conversation, and reading; and to gain all the information and light that was necessary to qualify them to do justice to their subject. Then, after they had begun to write, they did not hurry on their pen with speed and impatience to appear

in the view of the world; but they took time and pains to give every part of their discourse all possible strength and ornament, and to make the whole composition uniform and beautiful. They wisely considered, that productions which come before their due time into the world, are seldom perfect or long-lived; and that an author who designs to write for posterity, as well as the present generation, cannot study a work with too deep care and resolute industry.

Varus tells us of his incomparable friend Virgil, that he composed but very few verses in a day. That consummate philosopher, critic, and poet, regarded the value, not number of his lines; and never thought too much pains could be bestowed on a poem, that he might reasonably expect would be the wonder of all ages, and last out the whole duration of time. Quintilian assures us, that Sallust wrote with abundance of deliberation and prudent caution; and indeed that fully appears from his complete and exquisite writings. Demosthenes laboured night and day, outwatched the poor mechanic in Athens (that was forced to perpetual drudgery to support himself and his family) till he had acquired such a mastery in his noble profession, such a rational and over-ruling vehemence, such a perfect habit of nervous and convincing eloquence, as enabled him to defy the strongest opposition, and to triumph over envy and time.

Plato, when he was eighty years old, was busily employed in the review and amendment of his divine dialogues: and some people are severe upon Cicero, that in imitation of Plato, he was so scrupulous whether he ought to write *ad Piræa* or in *Piræa*, *Piræum*, or in *Piræum*, that now in the sixtieth year of his age, in the fury of the civil wars, when he knew not how to dispose of his family, and scarce expected safety, he earnestly intreated his noble and learned friend Atticus to resolve that difficulty, and ease him of the perplexity which it created him. Whatever raillery or reflection some humourous wits may make upon that great man's exactness and nicety in that respect, and at such a time; 'tis a plain proof of his wonderful care and diligence in his composition, and the strict regard he had to the purity and propriety of his language. The ancients so accurately understood, and so indefatigably studied their subject, that they scarce ever fail

fail to finish and adorn every part with strong sense, and lively expression.

Blackwall.

§ 142. ON HOMER.

'Tis no romantic commendation of Homer, to say, that no man understood persons and things better than he; or had a deeper insight into the humours and passions of human nature. He represents great things with such sublimity, and little ones with such propriety, that he always makes the one admirable, and the other pleasant.

He is a perfect master of all the lofty graces of the figurative style, and all the purity and easiness of the plain. Strabo, the excellent geographer and historian, assures us, that Homer has described the places and countries of which he gives account, with that accuracy, that no man can imagine who has not seen them; and no man but must admire and be astonished who has. His poems may justly be compared with that shield of divine workmanship so inimitably represented in the eighteenth book of the *Iliad*. You have there exact images of all the actions of war, and employments of peace; and are entertained with the delightful view of the universe. Homer has all the beauties of every dialect and style scattered through his writings; he is scarce inferior to any other poet, in the poet's own way and excellency; but excels all others in force and comprehension of genius, elevation of fancy, and immense copiousness of invention. Such a sovereignty of genius reigns all over his works, that the ancients esteemed and admired him as the great High Priest of nature, who was admitted into her inmost choir, and acquainted with her most solemn mysteries.

The great men of former ages, with one voice, celebrate the praises of Homer; and old Zoilus has only a few followers in these later times, who detract from him either for want of Greek, or from a spirit of conceit and contradiction.

These gentlemen tell us, that the divine Plato himself banished him out of his commonwealth; which, say they, must be granted to be a blemish upon the poet's reputation. The reason why Plato would not let Homer's poems be in the hands of the subjects of that government, was because he did not esteem ordinary men capable readers of them. They would be apt to pervert his meaning, and have wrong

notions of God and religion, by taking his bold and beautiful allegories in too literal a sense. Plato frequently declares that he loves and admires him as the best, the most pleasant, and the divinest of all the poets; and studiously imitates his figurative and mystical way of writing. Though he forbade his works to be read in public, yet he would never be without them in his own closet. Though the philosopher pretends, that for reasons of state he must remove him out of his city; yet he declares he would treat him with all possible respect while he staid; and dismiss him laden with presents, and adorned with garlands (as the priests and supplicants of their gods used to be); by which marks of honour, all people wherever he came might be warned and induced to esteem his person sacred, and receive him with due veneration.

Ibid.

§ 143. ON THEOCRITUS.

If we mention Theocritus, he will be another bright instance of the happy abilities and various accomplishments of the ancients. He has writ in several sorts of poetry, and succeeded in all. It seems unnecessary to praise the native simplicity and easy freedom of his pastorals; when Virgil himself sometimes invokes the muse of Syracuse; when he imitates him through all his own poems of that kind, and in several passages translates him. Quintilian says of our Sicilian bard, that he is admirable in his kind; but when he adds, that his muse is not only shy of appearing at the bar, but in the city too, 'tis evident this remark must be confined to his pastorals. In several of his other poems, he shews such strength of reason and politeness, as would qualify him to plead among the orators, and make him acceptable in the courts of princes. In his smaller poems of Cupid slung, Adonis killed by the Boar, &c. you have the vigour and delicacy of Anacreon; in his Hylas, and Combat of Pollux and Amycus, he is much more pathetical, clear and pleasant, than Apollonius on the same, or any other subject. In his conversation of Alcmena and Tiresias, of Hercules and the old servant of Augeas, in Cynicea and Thyonichus, and the women going to the ceremonies of Adonis, there is all the easiness and engaging familiarity of humour and dialogue, which reign in the *Odyssies*; and in Hercules destroying the lion of Nemea, the spirit and majesty of the *Iliad*. The panegyric upon king Ptolemy is justly esteemed

seemed an original and model of perfection in that way of writing. Both in that excellent poem, and the noble hymn upon Castor and Pollux, he has praised his gods and his hero with that delicacy and dexterity of address, with those sublime and graceful expressions of devotion and respect, that in politeness, smoothness of turn, and a refined art of praising without offence, or appearance of flattery, he has equalled Callimachus: and in loftiness and flight of thought, scarce yields to Pindar or Homer.

Blackwall.

§ 144. *On HERODOTUS.*

Herodotus had gained experience by travelling over all his own country, Thrace and Scythia; he travelled likewise to Arabia, Palestine, and Egypt; where he carefully viewed the chief curiosities and most remarkable places, and conversed with the Egyptian priests, who informed him of their ancient history, and acquainted him with their customs, sacred and civil. Indeed he speaks of their religious rites with such plainness and clearness in some cases, and such reserve and reverence in others, that I am apt to believe he was initiated into their ceremonies, and consecrated a priest of some of their orders*.

Thus, being acquainted with the most famous countries, and valuable things, and knowing the most considerable persons of the age, he applied himself to write the history of the Greeks and Barbarians: and performed the noble work with that judgment, faithfulness, and eloquence, that gained him the approbation and applause of the most august assembly in the world at that time, the flower of all Greece, met together at the Olympic games.

His history opens to the reader all the antiquities of Greece, and gives light to all her authors.

Ibid.

§ 145. *On LIVY.*

We do not find that Livy had travelled much, or been employed in military affairs; yet what he might want in experience, was happily supplied by wonderful parts and eloquence, by severe study, and unwearied endeavours after knowledge and information; so that he describes all the countries, towns, seas, and ports, whither the Roman legions and navies came, with near the same accuracy and perfection (if

possible) which he could any place in Italy; lays a siege, draws up an army, with skill and conduct scarce inferior to Cæsar himself. Was there as much charm in the conversation of this extraordinary man, as there is in his writings, the gentleman of Cales would not repent of his long journey, who came from thence only to see Livy, upon the fame of his incomparable eloquence, and other celebrated abilities; and we have reason to believe he received satisfaction, because, after he had seen Livy, and conversed with him, he had no curiosity to see Rome, to which he was so near; and which at that time was, for its magnificence and glories, one of the greatest wonders of the whole earth.

These two princes of Greek and Roman history tell a story, and make up a description, with inexpressible grace; and so delicately mix the great and little circumstances, that there is both the utmost dignity and pleasure in it.

Ibid.

§ 146. *Much of their Beauty arises from Variety.*

The reader is always entertained with an agreeable variety, both of matter and style, in Herodotus and Livy. And indeed every author that expects to please, must gratify the reader with variety: that is the universal charm, which takes with people of all tastes and complexions. 'Tis an appetite planted in us by the Author of our being; and is natural to an human soul, whose immense desires nothing but an infinite good, and unexhausted pleasure, can fully gratify. The most palatable dish becomes nauseous, if it be always set before a man: the most musical and harmonious notes, too often and unseasonably struck, grate the ear like the jarring of the most harsh and hateful discord.

These authors, and the rest of their spirit and elevation, were sensible of this; and therefore you find a continual change, and judicious variation, in their style and numbers.

One passage appears to be learned, and carefully laboured; an unstudied easiness, and becoming negligence, runs through the next. One sentence turns quick and short; and another, immediately following, runs into longer measures, and spreads itself with a sort of elegant and beautiful luxuriancy. They seldom use many periods together, consisting of the same number of members; nor are the members of their pe-

riods

* See Herodot. Gale's Edition, lib. ii. sect. 3. p. 91. sect. 65. p. 114. sect. 171. p. 156.

riods of equal length, and exact measure, one with another.

The reflections that are made by these noble writers, upon the conduct and humours of mankind, the interests of courts, and the intrigues of parties, are so curious and instructive, so true in their substance, and so taking and lively in the manner of their expression, that they satisfy the soundest judgement, and please the most sprightly imagination. From these glorious authors we have instruction without the common formality and dryness of precept; and receive the most edifying advice in the pleasing way of insinuation and surprize.

Blackwall.

§ 147. *Perspicuity a principal Beauty of the Classics.*

Another excellency of the true classics is, perspicuity, and clear style; which will excuse and cover several faults in an author; but the want of it is never to be atoned by any pretence of loftiness, caution, or any consideration whatever.

And this is the effect of a clear head, and vigorous understanding; of close and regular thinking, and the diligence of select reading. A man should write with the same design as he speaks, to be understood with ease, and to communicate his mind with pleasure and instruction. If we select Xenophon out of the other Greek classics, whether he writes of the management of family affairs, or the more arduous matters of state and policy; whether he gives an account of the wars of the Grecians, or the morals of Socrates; the style, though so far varied as to be suitable to every subject, yet is always clear and significant, sweet without lasciviousness, and elegantly easy.

In this genteel author we have all the politeness of a studied composition; and yet all the freedom and winning familiarity of elegant conversation.

Here I cannot but particularly mention Xenophon's Symposium, wherein he has given us an easy and beautiful description of a very lively and beautiful conversation. The pleasant and serious are there so happily mixed and tempered, that the discourse is neither too light for the grave, nor too solemn for the gay. There is mirth with dignity and decorum; and philosophy attended and enlivened by all the graces.

Ibid.

§ 148. *On CICERO.*

If among the Latin Classics we name Tully, upon every subject he equally shews the strength of his reason, and the brightness of his style. Whether he addresses his friend in the most graceful negligence of a familiar letter, or moves his auditors with laboured periods, and passionate strains of manly oratory; whether he proves the majesty of God, and immortality of human souls, in a more sublime and pompous eloquence; or lays down the rules of prudence and virtue, in a more calm and even way of writing; he always expresses good sense in pure and proper language: he is learned and easy, richly plain, and neat without affectation. He is always copious, but never runs into a faulty luxuriance, nor tires his reader; and though he says almost every thing that can be said upon his subject, yet you will scarce ever think he says too much. *Ibid.*

§ 149. *On the Obscurities in the Classics.*

Those few obscurities which are in the best authors, do not proceed from haste and confusion of thought, or ambiguous expressions, from a long crowd of parentheses, or perplexed periods; but either the places continue the same as they were in the original, and are not intelligible to us only by reason of our ignorance of some customs of those times and countries; or the passages are altered and spoiled by the presumption and busy impertinence of foolish transcribers and conceited critics. Which plainly appears from this; that since we have had more accurate accounts of the Greek and Roman antiquities, and old manuscripts have been searched and compared by able and diligent hands, innumerable errors have been rectified, and corruptions which have crept into the text, purged out: a various reading happily discovered, the removal of a verse, or a point of distinction out of the wrong into the right place, or the adding a small mark where it was left out, has given clear light to many passages, which for ages had lain overspread with an error, that had obscured the sense of the author, and quite confounded all the commentators. The latter part of the thirty-second verse of the hymn of Callimachus on Apollo was in the first editions thus, Τὸ δ' ὅπως φέρει, αἰεὶ δὲ; "who can sing of Phœbus in the mountains?" which was neither sense of itself, nor had any connexion with what went before. But Stephens's amendment of

of it set right both the sense and the connection, without altering a letter; *Tis a fine Phœbus* is said; "Phœbus is an unexhausted subject of praise;"—among all his glorious qualifications and exploits, what poet can be so dull, what wit so barren, as to want materials for an hymn to his honour?—In the fourth verse of the eleventh epigram of Theocritus, there wanted a little point in the word *ἑταῖροις*, which took off all the sprightliness and turn of the thoughts; which Daniel Heinsius luckily restored, by changing the nom. sing. *ἑταῖρος*, into the dat. plur. *ἑταῖροις*. "The friends of Euthenes the poet, gave him, though a stranger, an honourable burial in a foreign country; and the poet was extremely beloved by 'em." How flat and insipid! According to the amendment it runs thus: "The acquaintance of Euthenes buried him honourably, though in a foreign country, and he was extremely beloved by his brother poets themselves." For a man to be mightily honoured by strangers, and extremely beloved by people of the same profession, who are apt to malign and envy one another, is a very high commendation of his candour, and excellent temper. That very valuable amendment in the sixth line of Horace's preface to his odes, has cleared a difficulty, which none of the critics could handsomely acquit themselves of before the admirable Dr. Bentley; and has rescued the poet, eminent for the clearness of his style, from the imputation of harshness and obscurity in the very beginning, and first address to his reader; where peculiar care and accuracy are expected. It would be endless to mention the numerous places in the ancients happily restored and illustrated by that great man; who is not only a sound and discerning critic, but a clean and vigorous writer, excellently skilled in all divine and human literature; to whom all scholars are obliged for his learned performances upon the classics; and all mankind for his noble and glorious defence of religion. The learned Meursius was strangely puzzled with a passage in Minutius Felix*; and altered the text with such intolerable boldness, as, if allowed, would soon pervert and destroy all good authors; which the ingenious editor of that father has cleared, by putting the points of distinction in their proper places. *Reges tantum regni sui per officia ministrorum diversa novit.* Meursius had disguised

and deformed the passage thus: *Reges statum regni sui per officia ministrorum diversa novit.* Dr. Bentley has made a certain emendation in Horace's Art of Poetry, only by altering the places of two lines, making that which was the forty-sixth in the common books, the forty-fifth in his own beautiful editions. Blackwall.

§ 150. On several Advantages which the Classics enjoyed.

It was among the advantages which the chief classics enjoyed, that most of them were placed in prosperous and plentiful circumstances of life, raised above anxious cares, want, and abject dependance. They were persons of quality and fortune, courtiers and statesmen, great travellers, and generals of armies, possessed of the highest dignities and posts of peace and war. Their riches and plenty furnished them with leisure and means of study; and their employments improved them in knowledge and experience. How lively must they describe those countries, and remarkable places, which they had attentively viewed with their own eyes! What faithful and emphatical relations were they enabled to make of those councils, in which they presided; of those actions in which they were present and commanded!

Herodotus, the father of history, besides the advantages of his travels and general knowledge, was so considerable in power and interest, that he bore a chief part in expelling the tyrant Lygdamis, who had usurped upon the liberties of his native country.

Thucydides and Xenophon were of distinguished eminence and abilities, both in civil and military affairs; were rich and noble; had strong parts, and a careful education in their youth, completed by severe study in their advanced years: in short, they had all the advantages and accomplishments both of the retired and active life.

Sophocles bore great offices in Athens; led their armies, and in strength of parts, and nobleness of thought and expression, was not unequal to his colleague Pericles; who, by his commanding wisdom and eloquence, influenced all Greece, and was said to thunder and lighten in his harangues.

Euripides, famous for the purity of the Attic style, and his power in moving the passions, especially the softer ones of grief and pity, was invited to, and generously entertained in, the court of Archelaus king

* Min. Felix, Camb. edit. by Davis. § 33. p. 163. not. 7e.

king of Macedon. The smoothness of his composition, his excellency in dramatic poetry, the soundness of his morals, conveyed in the sweetest numbers, were so universally admired, and his glory so far spread, that the Athenians, who were taken prisoners in the fatal overthrow under Nicias, were preserved from perpetual exile and ruin, by the astonishing respect that the Sicilians, enemies and strangers, paid to the wit and fame of their illustrious countryman. As many as could repeat any of Euripides's verses, were rewarded with their liberty, and generously sent home with marks of honour.

Plato, by his father's side, sprung from Codrus, the celebrated king of Athens; and by his mother's from Solon, their no less celebrated law-giver. To gain experience, and enlarge his knowledge, he travelled into Italy, Sicily, and Egypt. He was courted and honoured by the greatest men of the age wherein he lived; and will be studied and admired by men of taste and judgment in all succeeding ages. In his works, are inestimable treasures of the best learning. In short, as a learned gentleman says, he writ with all the strength of human reason, and all the charm of human eloquence.

Anacreon lived familiarly with Polycrates king of Samos: and his sprightly muse, naturally flowing with innumerable pleasures and graces, must improve in delicacy and sweetness by the gaiety and refined conversation of that flourishing court.

The bold and exalted genius of Pindar was encouraged and heightened by the honours he received from the champions and princes of his age; and his conversation with the heroes qualified him to sing their praises with more advantage. The conquerors at the Olympic games scarce valued their garlands of honour, and wreaths of victory, if they were not crowned with his never-fading laurels, and immortalized by his celestial song. The noble Hiero of Syracuse was his generous friend and patron; and the most powerful and polite state of all Greece esteemed a line of his in praise of their glorious city, worth public acknowledgments, and a statue. Most of the genuine and valuable Latin Classics had the same advantages of fortune, and improving conversation, the same encouragements with these and the other celebrated Grecians.

Terence gained such a wonderful insight into the characters and manners of man-

kind, such an elegant choice of words, and fluency of style, such judgment in the conduct of his plot, and such delicate and charming turns, chiefly by the conversation of Scipio and Lælius, the greatest men, and most refined wits, of their age. So much did this judicious writer, and clean scholar, improve by his diligent application to study, and their genteel and learned conversation; that it was charged upon him by those who envied his superior excellencies, that he published their compositions under his own name. His enemies had a mind that the world should believe those noblemen wrote his plays, but scarce believed it themselves; and the poet very prudently and genteely slighted their malice, and made his great patrons the finest compliment in the world, by esteeming the accusation as an honour, rather than making any formal defence against it.*

Sallust, so famous for his neat expressive brevity and quick turns, for truth of fact and clearness of style, for the accuracy of his characters, and his piercing view into the mysteries of policy and motives of action, cultivated his rich abilities, and made his acquired learning so useful to the world, and so honourable to himself, by bearing the chief offices in the Roman government, and sharing in the important councils and debates of the senate.

Cæsar had a prodigious wit, and universal learning; was noble by birth, a consummate statesman, a brave and wise general, and a most heroic prince. His prudence and modesty in speaking of himself, the truth and clearness of his descriptions, the inimitable purity and perspicuity of his style, distinguish him with advantage from all other writers. None bears a nearer resemblance to him in more instances than the admirable Xenophon. What useful and entertaining accounts might reasonably be expected from such a writer, who gives you the geography and history of those countries and nations, which he himself conquered, and the description of those military engines, bridges, and encampments, which he himself contrived and marked out!

The best authors in the reign of Augustus, as Horace, Virgil, Tibullus, Propertius, &c. enjoyed happy times, and plentiful circumstances. That was the golden age of learning. They flourished under the favours and bounty of the richest and most generous court in the world; and the

* See Prologus to *Adelphi*, v. 15-32.

beams of majesty shone bright and propitious on them.

What could be too great to expect from such poets as Horace and Virgil, beloved and munificently encouraged by such patrons as Mæcenas and Augustus?

A chief reason why Tacitus writes with such skill and authority, that he makes such deep searches into the nature of things, and designs of men, that he so exquisitely understands the secrets and intrigues of courts, was, that he himself was admitted into the highest places of trust, and employed in the most public and important affairs. The statesman brightens the scholar, and the consul improves and elevates the historian. *Blackwall.*

§ 151. *On the Care of the Ancients in selecting Numbers.*

The Ancients are peculiarly to be admired for their care and happy exactness in selecting out the noblest and most valuable numbers, upon which the force and pleasantness of style principally depend. A discourse, consisting most of the strongest numbers, and best sort of feet, such as the Dactyl, Spondee, Anapest, Moloss, Cretic, &c. regularly compacted, stands firm and steady, and sounds magnificent and agreeable to a judicious ear. But a discourse made up of the weakest numbers, and the worst sort of feet, such as the Pyrrhichee, Choree, Trochee, &c. is loose and languid, and not capable with such advantage to express manly sense. It cannot be pronounced with ease, nor heard with patience. The periods of the classics are generally composed of the major part of the noblest numbers; and when they are forced to use weaker and worse-sounding feet and measures, they so carefully temper and strengthen them with firm and nervous syllables on both sides, that the imperfection is covered, and the dignity of the sentence preserved and supported.

Ibid.

§ 152. *On their making the Sound an Echo to the Sense.*

Another excellency, nearly allied to this, in these glorious writers, is their suiting the contexture of their discourse, and the sound of their syllables, to the nature and character of their subjects. That is, they so contrive and work their composition, that the sound shall be a resemblance, or, as Longinus says, an echo of the sense, and words lively pictures of things. In de-

scribing the loveliness of beauty, and the charms of joy and gaiety, they avoid disagreeable elisions; do not make the discourse harsh by joining mutes and coupling letters, that, being united, make a distasteful and grating sound. But by the choice of the best vowels, and the sweetest half-vowels, the whole composition is made smooth and delicate; and glides with easiness and pleasure through the ear.

In describing of a thing or person full of terror, ruggedness, or deformity, they use the worst-sounding vowels; and encumber the syllables with mutes of the roughest and most difficult pronunciation. The rushing of land-floods, the roaring of huge waters, and the dashing of waves against the shores, is imitated by words that make a vast and boisterous sound, and rudely clash together.

The great Plato, who had a genius for all manner of learning, was discouraged from poetry by reading that verse in Homer, which so wonderfully expresses the roaring of the billows:

*Ηρόης βοῶντι ἐκτροχιδέας ἄλδς ἰζήν **

Haste and swiftness are figured by short syllables, by quick and rapid numbers; slowness, gravity, &c. by long syllables, and numbers strong and solemn. I shall produce some instances, and speak to them just as they come into my thoughts, without any nicety of method. Virgil, in his account of the sufferings of wicked souls in the regions of punishment, fills the reader with dread and amazement: every syllable sounds terror; awe and astonishment accompany his majestic numbers. In that passage †,

— Tum sieva sonare
Verbera, tum stridor ferri, trachæque catenæ,

the hissing letter repeated with broad sounding vowels immediately following the force and roughness of the canine letter so often used, and those strong syllables in the second, third, and fourth places, emphatically express those dreadful sounds. A man of any ear will, upon the repetition of them, be apt to fancy he hears the crack of the furies whips, and the rattling and clank of infernal chains. Those harsh elisions, and heavy robust syllables, in that description of the hideous Cyclops, *Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens*, naturally express the enormous bulk and brutish

* *Iliad* 17. v. 265.
† *Æneid* 6. v. 558, &c.

fierceness,

fierceness, of that mis-shapen and horrid monster.

Our Spenser, one of the best poets this nation has bred, and whose faults are not to be imputed either to want of genius or care, but to the age he lived in, was very happy and judicious in the choice of his numbers; of which take this example, not altogether foreign or unparallel to that of Virgil just mentioned.

— He heard a dreadful sound,
Which through the wood loud-bellowing did rebound.

And then,

— His monstrous enemy
With sturdy steps came stalking in his sight,
An hideous giant, horrible and high *.

Those verses in the first Georgic,

*Ter sunt conati imponere Pelio Ossam
Scilicet, atque Ossæ frondosum involvere
Olympum †*

are contrived with great art to represent the prodigious pains the giants took in heaping mountains upon mountains to scale heaven, and the slowness of their progress in that unwieldy work.

For a vowel open before a vowel, makes a chasm, and requires a strong and full breath, therefore a pause must follow, which naturally expresses difficulty and opposition.

But when swiftness and speed are to be described, see how the same wonderful man varies his numbers, and still suits his verse to his subject!

*Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula
campum.*

Here the rapid numbers, and short syllables, sustained with strong vowels, admirably represent both the vigour and speed of a horse at full stretch scouring over the plain.

When Horace sings of mirth, beauty, and other subjects that require delicacy and sweetness of composition, he smooths his lines with soft syllables, and flows in gay and melting numbers. Scarce any reader is so much a stoic, but good-humour steals upon him; and he reads with something of the temper which the author was in when he wrote. How inexpressibly sweet are those neat lines!

*Urit me Glyceræ nitor,
Splendentis Pariæ marmore purius;
Urit grata protervitas,
Et vultus nimium lubricus aspicit.*

Fairy Queen.

Georg. 1. v. 281.

Innumerable beauties of this nature are scattered through his lyric poetry. But when he undertakes lofty and noble subjects, he raises his style, and strengthens his expression. For example, when he proposes to do honour to Pindar, and sing the glories of Augustus, he reaches the Grecian's noblest flights, has all his magnificence of thought, his strength of fancy, and daring liberty of figures.

The Roman swan soars as high as the Theban: he equals that commanding spirit, those awful and vigorous beauties, which he generously pronounces inimitable; and praises both his immortal predecessor in lyric poetry, and his royal benefactor, with as much grandeur, and exalted eloquence, as ever Pindar praised any of his heroes.

It is a just observation of Longinus, that though Homer and Virgil are chiefly confined to the Dactyl and Spondee, and rarely use any equivalent feet, yet they temper them together with such astonishing skill and diligence, so carefully vary their syllables, and adapt their sounds to the nature of the thing described, that in their poems there is all the harmonious change and variety of numbers, which can be composed by all the possible turns, and different positions of all the feet in the languages. *Blackwall.*

§ 153. *Translations cannot be sufficient Substitutes for such Originals.*

A reader of such authors can scarce ever be weary; he has the advantage of a traveller for many miles round Damascus; he never removes out of Paradise, but is regaled with a constant succession of pleasures, and enjoys in a small compass the bounty and gaiety of universal nature. From hence may be seen the injustice and folly of those people, who would have translations of the classics: and then, to save the trouble of learning Greek and Latin, throw away the great originals to dust and oblivion. I would indeed have all the classics turned into our language by the most masterly hands, (as we already have some) among other reasons, for this, that ingenious and inquisitive people, who have the misfortune not to be well acquainted with the learned tongues, may have some taste of their excellencies. Ignorant persons, who know nothing of their language, would soon be persuaded to believe; and shallow pretenders, who know nothing of their beauties, would boldly pronounce, that some

some translations we have go beyond the originals; while scholars of clear and sound judgment are well satisfied, that it is impossible any version should come up to them. A translation of the noble classics out of their native tongue, so much in many respects inferior to them, always more or less flattens their sense, and tarnishes their beauties. It is something like transplanting a precious tree out of the warm and fruitful climes in which it was produced, into a cold and barren country: with much care and tenderness it may live, blossom and bear; but it can never so cheerfully flourish, as in its native soil; it will degenerate and lose much of its delicious flavour, and original richness. And besides the weakening of the sense (though that be by far the most important consideration) Greek and Latin have such a noble harmony of sound, such force and dignity of numbers, and such delicacy of turn in the periods, that cannot entirely be preserved in any language of the world. These two languages are so peculiarly susceptible of all the graces of wit and elocution, that they are read with more pleasure and lively gust, and consequently with more advantage, than the most perfect translation that the ablest genius can compose, or the strongest modern language can bear. The pleasure a man takes in reading, engages a close attention; raises and cheers the spirits; and impresses the author's sentiments and expressions deeper on the memory. A gentleman travels through the finest countries in the world, is in all respects qualified to make observations, and then writes a faithful and curious history of his travels. I can read his relations with pleasure and improvement, and will pay him the praise due to his merits; but must believe, that if I myself travelled through those countries, and attentively viewed and considered all those curiosities of art and nature which he describes, I should have a more satisfactory idea, and higher pleasure, than it is possible to receive from the exactest accounts. Authors of such distinguished parts and perfections, cannot be studied by a rational and discerning reader without very valuable advantages. Their strong sense and manly thought, clothed in the most significant and beautiful language, will improve his reason and judgment: and enable him to acquire the art of genteel and sensible writing. For it is a most absurd objection, that the Classics do not improve

your reason, nor enlarge your knowledge of useful things, but only amuse and divert you with artificial turns of words, and flourishes of rhetoric. Let but a man of capacity read a few lines in Plato, Demosthenes, Tully, Sallust, Juvenal, &c. and he will immediately discover all such objections either to proceed from ignorance, a depraved taste, or intolerable conceit. The classics are intimately acquainted with those things they undertake to treat of; and explain and adorn their subject with sound reasoning, exact disposition, and beautiful propriety of language. No man in his right mind would have people to study them with neglect and exclusion of other parts of useful knowledge, and good learning. No; let a man furnish himself with all the arts and sciences, that he has either capacity or opportunity to learn; and he will still find, that readiness and skill in these correct and rational authors is not the least ornamental or serviceable part of his attainments. The neatness and delicacy of their compositions will be refreshment and music, after the toils of severer and harsher studies. The brightness of their sense, and the purity and elegance of their diction, will qualify most people, who duly admire and study their excellencies, to communicate their thoughts with energy and clearness. Some gentlemen, deeply read in old systems of philosophy, and the abstruser part of learning, for want of a sufficient acquaintance with these great masters of style and politeness, have not been able so to express their notions, as to make their labours fully intelligible and useful to mankind. Irregular broken periods, long and frequent parentheses, and harsh tropes, have perplexed their notions; and much of their sense has lain buried under the confusion and rubbish of an obscure and horrid style. The brightest and most rational thoughts are obscured, and in a great measure spoiled, if they be encumbered with obsolete and coarse words unskillfully placed, and ungracefully turned. The matchless graces of some fine odes in Anacreon or Horace, do chiefly arise from the judicious choice of the beautiful words, and the delicacy and harmoniousness of the structure.

Blackwall.

§ 155. *The peculiar Excellence of the Speeches of the GREEKS and ROMANS.*

Besides the other advantages of studying the classical historians, there is one, which

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which gentlemen of birth and fortune, qualified to manage public business, and sit as members in the most august assemblies, have a more considerable share in, than people of meaner condition. The speeches of the great men among the Greeks and Romans deserve their peculiar study and imitation, as being master-pieces of clear reasoning and genuine eloquence: the orators in the Classics fairly state their case, and strongly argue it: their remarks are surprising and pertinent, their repartees quick, and their raillery clear and diverting. They are bold without rashness or insolence; and severe with good manners and decency. They do justice to their subject, and speak agreeably to the nature of things, and characters of persons. Their sentences are sprightly, and their morals sound. In short, no part of the compositions of the ancients is more finished, more instructive and pleasing, than their orations. Here they seem to exert their choicest abilities, and collect the utmost force of their genius. Their whole histories may be compared to a noble and delicious country, that lies under the favourable eye and perpetual smiles of the heavens, and is every where crowned with pleasure and plenty: but their choice descriptions and speeches seem like some peculiarly fertile and happy spots of ground in that country, on which nature has poured out her riches with a more liberal hand, and art has made the utmost improvements of her bounty. They have taken so much pains, and used such accuracy in the speeches, that the greater pleasure they have given the reader, the more they have exposed themselves to the censure of the critic. The orations are too sublime and elaborate; and those persons to whom they are ascribed, could not at those times compose or speak them. 'Tis allowed, that they might not deliver themselves in that exact number and collection of words, which the historians have so curiously laid together; but it can scarce be denied, but the great men in history had frequent occasions of speaking in public; and 'tis probable, that many times they did actually speak to the same purpose. Fabius Maximus and Scipio, Cæsar and Cato, were capable of making as good speeches as Livy or Sallust; and Pericles was an orator no ways inferior to Thucydides. When the reason of the thing will allow that there was time and room for premeditation, there is no question but many of those admirable men

in history spoke as well as they are represented by those able and eloquent writers. But then the historians putting the speeches into their own style, and giving us those harangues in form, which we cannot tell how they could come at, trespass against probability, and the strict rules of writing history. It has always been allowed to great wits sometimes to step out of the beaten road, and to soar out of the view of a heavy scholiast. To grant all that is in the objection: the greatest Classics were liable to human infirmities and errors; and whenever their forward censures shall fall into such irregularities, and commit such faults joined to such excellencies, the learned world will not only pardon, but admire them. We may say of that celebrated speech of Marius in Sallust, and others that are most attacked upon this foot, as the friends of Virgil do in excuse of his offending against chronology in the story of *Æneas* and *Dido*; that had there been no room for such little objections, the world had wanted some of the most charming and consummate productions of human wit. Whoever made those noble speeches and debates, they so naturally arise from the posture of affairs, and circumstances of the times which the authors then describe, and are so rational, so pathetic, and becoming, that the pleasure and instruction of the reader is the same. A complete dissertation upon the uses and beauties of the chief speeches in the classical historians, would be a work of curiosity, that would require an able genius and fine pen. I shall just make some short strictures upon two; one out of Thucydides, and the other out of Tacitus.

Blackwall.

§ 155. *On the Funeral Oration of Pericles.*

The funeral oration made by Pericles upon his brave countrymen who died in battle, is full of prudence and manly eloquence; of hearty zeal for the honour of his country, and wise remarks. He does not lavish away his commendations, but renders the honour of the state truly desirable, by shewing they are always conferred with judgment and wariness. He praises the dead, in order to encourage the living to follow their example; to which he proposes the strongest inducements in the most moving and lively manner; from the consideration of the immortal honours paid to the memory of the deceased; and,

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the generous provisions made by the government for the dear persons left behind by those who fell in their country's cause. He imputes the greatest share of the merits of those gallant men, to the excellency of the Athenian constitution; which trained them up in such regular discipline, and secured to them and their descendants such invaluable privileges, that no man of sense and gratitude, of public spirit, and a lover of his children, would scruple to venture his life to preserve them inviolable, and transmit them to late posterity. The noble orator in his speech gives an admirable character of his countrymen the Athenians. He represents them as brave, with consideration and coolness; and polite and genteel, without effeminacy. They are, says he, easy to their fellow-citizens, and kind and communicative to strangers: they cultivate and improve all the arts, and enjoy all the pleasures of peace; and yet are never surprised at the alarms, nor impatient of the toils and fatigues of war. They are generous to their friends, and terrible to their enemies. They use all the liberty that can be desired without insolence or licentiousness; and fear nothing but transgressing the laws.*

Blackwall.

§ 156. *On MUCIAN'S Speech in TACITUS.*

Mucian's speech in Tacitus † contains many important matters in a small compass; and in a few clear and emphatical words goes through the principal topics of persuasion. He presses and conjures Vespasian to dispute the empire with Vitellius, by the duty he owes his bleeding country; by the love he has for his hopeful sons; by the fairest prospect of success that could be hoped for, if he once vigorously set upon that glorious business; but, if he neglected the present opportunity, by the dismal appearance of the worst evils that could be feared: he encourages him by the number and goodness of his forces; by the interest and steadiness of his friends; by the vices of his rival, and his own virtues. Yet all the while this great man compliments Vespasian, and pays him honour, he is cautious not in the least to diminish his own glory: if he readily allows him the first rank of merit, he briskly claims the second to himself. Never were liberty

and complaisance of speech more happily mixed; he conveys sound exhortation in praise; and at the same time says very bold and very obliging things. In short, he speaks with the bravery of a soldier, and the freedom of a friend: in his address, there is the air and the gracefulness of an accomplished courtier; in his advice, the sagacity and caution of a consummate statesman.

Ibid.

§ 157. *The Classics exhibit a beautiful System of Morals.*

Another great advantage of studying the Classics is, that from a few of the best of them may be drawn a good system and beautiful collection of sound morals. There the precepts of a virtuous and happy life are set off in the light and gracefulness of clear and moving expression; and eloquence is meritoriously employed in vindicating and adorning religion. This makes deep impressions on the minds of young gentlemen, and charms them with the love of goodness so engagingly dressed, and so beautifully commended. The Offices, Cato Major, Tusculan Questions, &c. of Tully, want not much of Epictetus and Antonine in morality, and are much superior in language. Pindar writes in an excellent strain of piety as well as poetry; he carefully wipes off the aspersions that old fables had thrown upon the deities; and never speaks of things or persons sacred, but with the tenderest caution and reverence. He praises virtue and religion with a generous warmth; and speaks of its eternal rewards with a pious assurance. A notable critic has observed, to the perpetual scandal of this poet, that his chief, if not only excellency, lies in his moral sentences. Indeed Pindar is a great master of this excellency, for which all men of sense will admire him; and at the same time be astonished at that man's honesty who slights such an excellency; and that man's understanding, who cannot discover many more excellencies in him. I remember, in one of his Olympic Odes, in a noble confidence of his own genius, and a just contempt of his vile and malicious adversaries, he compares himself to an eagle, and them to crows: and indeed he soars far above the reach and out of the view of noisy flattering cavillers. The famous Greek professor, Dupont, has made an entertaining and useful collection of Homer's divine and moral sayings, and has with great dexterity compared them with parallel passages

* See Thucyd. Oxon. Ed. lib. 2. p. 103.

† Tacit. Elzevir. Ed. 1634. Hist. 2. p. 581.

ges out of the inspired writers*: By which it appears, that there is no book in the world so like the style of the Holy Bible, as Homer. The noble historians abound with moral reflections upon the conduct of human life; and powerfully instruct both by precepts and examples. They paint vice and villainy in horrid colours; and employ all their reason and eloquence to pay due honours to virtue, and render undissembled goodness amiable in the eye of mankind. They express a true reverence for the established religion, and a hearty concern for the prosperous state of their native country. *Blackwall.*

§ 158. *On XENOPHON'S Memoirs of SOCRATES.*

Xenophon's memorable things of Socrates, is a very instructive and refined system of morality: it goes through all points of duty to God and man, with great clearness of sense and sound notion, and with inexpressible simplicity and purity of language. The great Socrates there discourses in such a manner, as is most proper to engage and persuade all sorts of readers; he argues with the reason of a philosopher, directs with the authority of a lawgiver, and addresses with the familiarities and endearments of a friend.

He made as many improvements in true morality, as could be made by the unassisted strength of human reason; nay, he delivers himself in some places, as if he was enlightened by a ray from heaven. In one of Plato's divine dialogues†, Socrates utters a surprising prophecy of a divine person, a true friend and lover of human nature, who was to come into the world to instruct them in the most acceptable way of addressing their prayers to the majesty of God. *Ibid.*

§ 159. *On the Morality of JUVENAL.*

I do not wonder when I hear that some prelates of the church have recommended the serious study of Juvenal's moral parts to their clergy. That manly and vigorous author, so perfect a master in the serious and sublime way of satire, is not unacquainted with any of the excellencies of good writing; but is especially to be admired and valued for his exalted morals. He dissuades from wickedness, and exhorts

to goodness, with vehemence of zeal that can scarce be dissembled, and strength of reason that cannot easily be resisted. He does not praise virtue, and condemn vice, as one has a favourable, and the other a malignant aspect upon a man's fortune in this world only; but he establishes the unalterable distinctions of good and evil; and builds his doctrine upon the immovable foundations of God and infinite Providence.

His morals are suited to the nature and dignity of an immortal soul; and, like it, derive their original from heaven.

How sound and serviceable is that wonderful notion in the thirteenth satire*, That an inward inclination to do an ill thing is criminal: that a wicked thought stains the mind with guilt, and exposes the offender to the punishment of heaven, though it never ripen into action! A suitable practice would effectually crush the serpent's head, and banish a long and black train of mischiefs and miseries out of the world. What a scene of horror does he disclose, when in the same satire† he opens to our view the wounds and gashes of a wicked conscience! The guilty reader is not only terrified at dreadful cracks and flashes of the heavens, but looks pale and trembles at the thunder and lightning of the poet's awful verse. The notion of true fortitude cannot be better stated than it is in the eighth satire‡, where he pressingly exhorts his reader always to prefer his conscience and principles before his life; and not be restrained from doing his duty, or be awed into a compliance with a villainous proposal, even by the presence and command of a barbarous tyrant, or the nearest prospect of death in all the circumstances of cruelty and terror. Must not a professor of Christianity be ashamed of himself for harbouring uncharitable and bloody resentments in his breast, when he reads and considers that invaluable passage against revenge in the above-mentioned thirteenth satire§? where he argues against that fierce and fatal passion, from the ignorance and littleness of that mind which is possessed with it; from the honour and generosity of passing by and forgiving injuries; from the example of those wise and mild men, of Chryseippus and Thales, and

* V. 208, &c.

† V. 192, &c. 210, &c.

‡ V. 79—85.

§ V. 181, &c.

* *Gnomologia Homerica*, Cantab. 1660.

† *Dialog. Select.*, Cantab. 1683. ad Alcibiad. p. 255.

especially that of Socrates, that undaunted champion and martyr of natural religion; who was so great a proficient in the best philosophy, that he was assured his malicious prosecutors and murderers could do him no hurt; and had not himself the least inclination or rising wish to do them any; who discoursed with that chearful gravity, and graceful composure, a few moments before he was going to die, as if he had been going to take possession of a kingdom; and drank off the poisonous bowl, as a potion of Immortality. *Blackwall.*

§ 160. *The best Classics lay down excellent Rules for Conversation.*

The best Classics lay down very valuable rules for the management of conversation, for graceful and proper address to those persons with whom we converse. They instruct their readers in the methods of engaging and preserving friends; and reveal to them the true secret of pleasing mankind. This is a large and agreeable field; but I shall confine myself to a small compass.

While Tully, under the person of Crassus, gives an account of the word *ineptus*, or impertinent, he insinuates excellent caution to prevent a man from rendering himself ridiculous and distasteful to company. These are his words: "He that either does not observe the proper time of a thing, or speaks too much, or vainly gloriously sets himself off, or has not a regard to the dignity or interest of those he converses with, or, in a word, is in any kind indecent or excessive, is called impertinent." That is admirable advice in the third book of his Offices, for the prudent and graceful regulation of a man's discourse (which has so powerful an influence upon the misfortune or happiness of life) that we should always speak with that prudence, candour, and undissembled complaisance, that the persons we address may be persuaded that we both love and reverence them.

For this persuasion settled in their minds, will secure their friendship, and create us the pleasure of their mutual love and respect. Every judicious reader of Horace will allow the justness of Sir William Temple's character of him, That he was the greatest master of life, and of true sense in the conduct of it. Is it possible to comprise better advice in fewer lines, than those of his to his friend Lollius, which I shall give you in the original?

Arcanum neque tu scrutaberis ullius unquam;
Commissumque teges, & vino tortus & ira:
Nec tua laudabis studia, aut aliena reprehendes:
Nec, cum venari volet ille, poemata panges*.

Horace had an intimate friendship and interest with men of the chief quality and distinction in the empire; who then was fitter to lay down rules how to approach the great, and gain their countenance and patronage?

This great man has a peculiar talent of handsomely expressing his gratitude to his noble benefactors: he just puts a due value upon every favour; and, in short, manages that nice subject of praise with a manly grace, and irreproachable decency. How clean is that address to Augustus absent from Rome, in the fifth ode of the fourth book!

Lucem redde tuæ, dux bone, patriæ;
Insar veris enim, vultus ubi tuus
Assulsit populo, gravior it dies,
Et soles melius nitent.

Here are no forced figures or unnatural rants; 'tis all seasonable and beautiful, poetical and literally true. *Ibid.*

§ 161. *Directions for reading the Classics.*

Those excellencies of the Ancients, which I have accounted for, seem to be sufficient to recommend them to the esteem and study of all lovers of good and polite learning: and that the young scholar may study them with suitable success and improvement, a few directions may be proper to be observed; which I shall lay down in this chapter. 'Tis in my opinion a right method to begin with the best and most approved Classics; and to read those authors first, which must often be read over. Besides, that the best authors are easiest to be understood, their noble sense and animated expression will make strong impressions upon the young scholar's mind, and train him up to the early love and imitation of their excellencies.

Plautus, Catullus, Terence, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Juvenal, Tibullus, Propertius, cannot be studied too much, or gone over too often. One reading may suffice for Lucan, Statius, Valerius Flaccus, Silius Italicus, Claudian; though there will be frequent occasions to consult some of their particular passages. The same may be said with respect to the Greek poets: Homer, Pindar, Anacreon, Aristophanes, Euripides, Sophocles, Theocritus, Callimachus, must never be entirely laid aside;

* Hor. Ep. 18, l. 1. v. 37.

and will recompence as many repetitions as a man's time and affairs will allow. Hesiod, Orpheus, Theogonis, Æschylus, Lycophron, Apollonius Rhodius, Nicander Aratus, Oppian, Quintus Calaber, Dionysius, Periegetes, and Nonnus, will amply reward the labour of one careful perusal. Sallust, Livy, Cicero, Cæsar, and Tacitus, deserve to be read several times; and read them as oft as you please, they will always afford fresh pleasure and improvement. I cannot but place the two Plinys after these illustrious writers, who flourished, indeed, when the Roman language was a little upon the declension: but by the vigour of a great genius, and wondrous industry, raised themselves in a great measure above the discouragements and disadvantages of the age they lived in. In quality and learning, in experience of the world, and employments of importance in the government, they were equal to the greatest of the Latin writers, though excelled by some of them in language.

The elder Pliny's natural history is a work learned and copious, that entertains you with all the variety of nature itself, and is one of the greatest monuments of universal knowledge, and unwearied application, now extant in the world. His geography, and description of herbs, trees and animals, are of great use to the understanding of all the authors of Rome and Greece.

Pliny the younger is one of the finest wits that Italy has produced; he is correct and elegant, has a florid and gay fancy, tempered with maturity and soundness of judgment. Every thing in him is exquisitely studied; and yet, in general speaking, every thing is natural and easy. In his incomparable oration in honour of Trajan, he has frequent and surprising turns of true wit, without playing and tinkling upon sounds. He has exhausted the subject of panegyric, using every topic, and every delicacy of praise. Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Plato, Demosthenes, are of the same merit among the Greeks: to which, I think, I may add Polybius, Lucian, and Plutarch. Polybius was nobly born, a man of deep thought, and perfect master of his subject: he discovers all the mysteries of policy, and presents to your view the inmost springs of those actions which he describes: his remarks and maxims have been regarded, by the greatest men both in civil and military affairs, as oracles of prudence: Scipio was his friend and admirer; Cicero, Strabo, and Plutarch, have honoured him

with high commendations; Constantine the Great was his diligent reader; and Brutus abridged him for his own constant use. Lucian is an universal scholar, and a prodigious wit: he is Attic and neat in his style, clear in his narration, and wonderfully facetious in his repartees: he furnishes you with almost all the poetical history in such a diverting manner, that you will not easily forget it; and supplies the most dry and barren wit with a rich plenty of materials. Plutarch is an author of deep sense, and vast learning; though he does not reach his illustrious predecessors in the graces of his language, his morals are sound and noble, illustrated with a perpetual variety of beautiful metaphors and comparisons, and enforced with very remarkable stories, and pertinent examples: in his Lives there is a complete account of all the Roman and Grecian antiquities, or their customs, and affairs of peace and war: those writings will furnish a capable and inquisitive reader with a curious variety of characters, with a very valuable store of wise remarks and sound politics. The surface is a little rough, but under lie vast quantities of precious ore. *Blackwall.*

§ 162. *The subordinate Classics not to be neglected.*

Every repetition of these authors will bring the reader fresh profit and satisfaction. The rest of the Classics must by no means be neglected; but ought once to be carefully read over, and may ever after be occasionally consulted with much advantage. The Grecian Classics next in value to those we have named, are, Diodorus Siculus, Dionysius Halicarnassensis, Strabo, Ælian, Arrian's Expedition of Alexander the Great, Polyzenus, Herodian; the Latin are, Hirtius, Justin, Quintus Curtius, Florus, Nepos, and Suetonius. We may, with a little allowance, admit that observation to be just, that he who would completely understand one Classic, must diligently read all. When a young gentleman is entered upon a course of these studies, I would not have him to be discouraged at the checks and difficulties he will sometimes meet with: if upon close and due consideration he cannot entirely master any passage, let him proceed by constant and regular reading, he will either find in that author he is upon, or some other on the same subject, a parallel place that will clear the doubt.

The Greek authors wonderfully explain
H h 3 and

and illustrate the Roman. Learning came late to Rome, and all the Latin writers follow the plans that were laid out before them by the great masters of Greece.

They every where imitate the Greeks, and in many places translate 'em. Compare 'em together, and they will be a comment to one another; you will by this means be enabled to pass a more certain judgment upon the humour and idiom of both languages; and both the pleasure and advantage of your reading will be double.

Blackwall.

§ 163. *The Greek and Latin Writers to be compared.*

By a careful comparison of the Greek and Latin writers, you will see how judiciously the latter imitated the former; and will yourself be qualified, with greater pleasure and success, to read and imitate both. By observing what advantages Virgil has made of Homer in his *Aeneid*, and of Theocritus in his *Pastorals*; how cleanly Horace has applied several places, out of Anacreon and other lyrics, to his own purpose; you will learn to collect precious stores out of the Ancients; to transfuse their spirits into your language with as little loss as possible; and to borrow with so much modesty and discretion, as to make their riches your own, without the scandal of unfair dealing. It will be convenient and pleasant to compare authors together, that were countrymen and fellow-citizens; as Euripides, Thucydides, and Xenophon: that were contemporaries; as Theocritus and Callimachus: that writ in the same dialect; as Anacreon and Herodotus, in the Ionic; Theocritus, Pindar, and Callimachus, upon Ceres and the Bath of Pallas, in the Doric: that writ upon the same subject; as Apollonius, Valerius Flaccus, and Theocritus, on the combat of Pollux and Amycus, and the death of Hylas. Sallust's polite and curious history of Cataline's conspiracy, and Tully's four glorious orations upon the same subject, are the brightest commentaries upon each other. The historian and the orator scarce disagree in one particular; and Sallust has left behind him an everlasting monument of his candour and impartiality, by owning and commending the consul's vigilance, and meritorious services; though these two great men had the misfortune to be violent enemies. He that praises and honours an adversary, shews his own generosity and justice, by proclaiming his adversary's eminent merits.

By comparing authors after this method,

what seems difficult in one will be easy in another; what one expresses short, another will enlarge upon; and if some of them do not furnish us with all the variety of the dialect and idioms of the language, the rest will supply those defects. It will likewise be necessary for the young scholar diligently to remark and commit to memory the religious and civil customs of the Ancients: an accurate knowledge of them will make him capable to discern and relish the propriety of an author's words, and the elegance and graces of his allusions. When St. Paul speaks of his speedy approaching martyrdom, he uses this expression, *Εγὼ γὰρ ἤδη σπαρασσομαι**; which is an allusion to that universal custom of the world, of pouring wine or oil on the head of the victim immediately before it was slain. The apostle's emphatical word signifies—wine is just now pouring on my head, I am just going to be sacrificed to Pagan rage and superstition. That passage of St. Paul, "For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men †;" is all expressed in Agonistical terms, and cannot be understood, without taking the allusion that it manifestly bears to the Roman gladiators, which came last upon the stage at noon, and were marked out for certain slaughter and destruction; being naked, with a sword in one hand, and tearing one another in pieces with the other; whereas, those who fought the wild beasts in the morning were allowed weapons offensive and defensive, and had a chance to come off with life. The most ancient way of giving sentence among the Greeks, and particularly the Athenians, was by black and white pebbles, called *ἰσθμὶ*. Those judges who put the black ones into an urn, passed sentence of condemnation upon the person tried; and those who put in the white, acquitted and saved. Hence we may learn the significancy and beauty of our Saviour's words in St. John, "to him that overcometh I will give a white stone ‡." I, who am the only judge of the whole world, will pass the sentence of absolution upon my faithful servants, and the champions of my cross; and crown them with the inestimable rewards of immortality and glory. There are innumerable places, both in the Sacred Classics and the others, which are not to

* 2 Tim. iv. 6.

† 1 Cor. iv. 9.

‡ Rev. ii.

be understood without a competent knowledge of antiquities. I call the writers of the New Testament the Sacred Classics; and shall, in a proper place, endeavour fully to prove, that they deserve the highest character for the purity of their language, as well as the vigour of their sense, against the ignorance of some, and the insolence of others, who have fallen very rudely upon them with respect to their style. Every scholar, and every Christian, is obliged to the utmost of his abilities, to defend those venerable authors against all exceptions, that may in any respect tend to diminish their value. I cannot but be of the opinion of those gentlemen, who think there is propriety in the expression, as well as sublimity in the sentiments of the New Testament; and esteem that man as bad a critic, who undervalues its language, as he is a Christian, who denies its doctrines.

Blackwall.

§ 164. *On the Study of the New Testament.*

The classic scholar must by no means be so much wanting to his own duty, pleasure and improvement, as to neglect the study of the New Testament, but must be perpetually conversant in those inestimable writings, which have all the treasures of divine wisdom, and the words of eternal life in them. The best way will be to make them the first and last of all your studies, to open and close the day with that sacred book, wherein you have a faithful and most entertaining history of that blessed and miraculous work of the redemption of the world; and sure directions how to qualify and entitle yourself for the great salvation purchased by Jesus.

This exercise will compose your thoughts into the sweetest serenity and cheerfulness; and happily consecrate all your time and studies to God. After you have read the Greek Testament once over with care and deliberation, I humbly recommend to your frequent and attentive perusal, these following chapters:

St. Matthew 5. 6. 7. 25. 26. 27. 28.—
St. Mark 1. 13.—St. Luke 2. 9. 15. 16.
23. 24.—St. John 1. 11. 14. 15. 16. 17.
19. 20.—Acts 26. 27.—Romans 2. 8.
12.—1 Cor. 3. 9. 13. 15.—2 Cor. 4.
6. 11.—Ephes. 4. 5. 6.—Philipp. 1. 2.
3.—Coloss. 1. 3.—1 Thess. 2. 5.—
1 Tim. 1. 6.—2 Tim. 2. 3.—Phile-
mon.—Heb. 1. 4. 6. 11. 12.—1 St.
Peter all.—2 St. Peter all.—St. Jude.

—1 St. John 1. 3.—Revel. 1. 18. 19. 20.

In this collection you will find the Book of God, written by the evangelists; and apostles, comprised in a most admirable and comprehensive epitome. A true critic will discover numerous instances of every style in perfection; every grace and ornament of speech more chaste and beautiful than the most admired and shining passages of the secular writers.

In particular, the description of God, and the future state of heavenly glory, in St. Paul and St. Peter, St. James and St. John, as far transcend the descriptions of Jupiter and Olympus, which Homer, and Pindar, and Virgil, give us, as the thunder and lightning of the heavens do the rattling and flashes of a Salmopeus: or the eternal Jehovah is superior to the Pagan deities. In all the New Testament, especially these select passages, God delivers to mankind laws of mercy, mysteries of wisdom, and rules of happiness, which fools and madmen stupidly neglect, or impiously scorn; while all the best and brightest beings in the universe regard them with sacred attention, and contemplate them with wonder and transporting delight. These studies, with a suitable Christian practice (which they so loudly call for, and so pathetically press) will raise you above all vexatious fears, and deluding hopes; and keep you from putting an undue value upon either the eloquence or enjoyments of this world.

Ibid.

§ 165. *The old Critics to be studied.*

That we may still qualify ourselves the better to read and relish the Classics, we must seriously study the old Greek and Latin critics. Of the first are Aristotle, Dionysius Longinus, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus: of the latter are Tully, Horace, and Quintilian. These are excellent authors, which lead their readers to the fountain-head of true sense and sublimity; teach them the first and infallible principles of convincing and moving eloquence; and reveal all the mystery and delicacy of good writing. While they judiciously discover the excellencies of other authors, they successfully shew their own; and are glorious examples of that sublime they praise. They take off the general distastefulness of precepts; and rules, by their dexterous management, have beauty as well as usefulness. They were, what every true critic must be, persons of great reading

and happy memory, of a piercing sagacity and elegant taste. They praise without flattery or partial favour; and censure without pride or envy. We shall still have a completer notion of the perfections and beauties of the ancients, if we read the choicest authors in our own tongue, and some of the best writers of our neighbour nations, who always have the Ancients in view, and write with their spirit and judgment. We have a glorious set of poets, of whom I shall only mention a few, which are the chief; Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Waller, Denham, Cowley, Dryden, Prior, Addison, Pope; who are inspired with the true spirit of their predecessors of Greece and Rome; and by whose immortal works the reputation of the English poetry is raised much above that of any language in Europe. Then we have prose writers of all professions and degrees, and upon a great variety of subjects, true admirers and great masters of the old Classics and Critics; who observe their rules, and write after their models. We have Raleigh, Clarendon, Temple, Taylor, Tillotson, Sharp, Sprat, South—with a great many others, both dead and living, that I have not time to name, though I esteem them not inferior to the illustrious few I have mentioned; who are in high esteem with all readers of taste and distinction, and will be long quoted as bright examples of good sense and fine writing. Horace and Aristotle will be read with greater delight and improvement, if we join with them, the Duke of Buckingham's Essay on Poetry, Roscommon's Translation of Horace's Art of Poetry, and Essay on Translated Verse, Mr. Pope's Essay on Criticism, and Discourses before Homer, Dryden's Critical Prefaces and Discourses, all the Spectators that treat upon Classical Learning, particularly the justly admired and celebrated critique upon Milton's Paradise Lost, Dacier upon Aristotle's Poetics, Bossu on Epic Poetry, Boileau's Art of Poetry, and Reflections on Longinus, Dr. Felton's Dissertation on the Classics, and Mr. Trapp's Poetical Prelections. These gentlemen make a true judgment and use of the Ancients: they esteem it a reputation to own they admire them, and borrow from them; and make a grateful return, by doing honour to their memories, and defending them against the attacks of some over-forward wits, who furiously envy their fame, and infinitely fall short of their merit.

Blackwall.

§ 166. *The best Authors to be read several Times over.*

I cannot but here repeat what I said before, of the advantage of reading the best authors several times over. There must needs be pleasure and improvement in a repetition of such writers as have fresh beauties in every section, and new wonders arising in every new page.

One superficial reading exhausts the small stores of a superficial writer, but the genuine Ancients, and those who write with their spirit and after their pattern, are deep and full. An ill written loose book is like a formal common-place book, who has a set of phrases and stories, which in a conversation or two are all run over; the man quickly impoverishes himself, and in a few hours becomes perfectly dry and insipid. But the old Classics, and their genuine followers among the moderns, are like a rich natural genius, who has an unfailing supply of good sense on all occasions; and gratifies his company with a perpetual and charming variety.

Ibid.

§ 167. *The Rise and Progress of Philosophical Criticism.*

Ancient Greece, in its happy days, was the seat of Liberty, of Sciences, and of Arts. In this fair region, fertile of wit, the Epic writers came first; then the Lyric; then the Tragic; and, lastly, the Historians, the Comic Writers, and the Orators, each in their turns delighting whole multitudes, and commanding the attention and admiration of all. Now, when wise and thinking men, the subtil investigators of principles and causes, observed the wonderful effect of these works upon the human mind, they were prompted to enquire whence this should proceed; for that it should happen merely from Chance, they could not well believe.

Here therefore we have the rise and origin of Criticism, which in its beginning was "a deep and philosophical search into the primary laws and elements of good writing, as far as they could be collected from the most approved performances."

In this contemplation of authors, the first critics not only attended to the powers and different species of words; the force of numerous composition, whether in prose or verse; the aptitude of its various kinds to different subjects; but they farther considered

sidered that, which is the basis of all, that is to say, in other words, the meaning of the sense. This led them at once into the most curious of subjects; the nature of man in general; the different characters of men, as they differ in rank or age; their reason and their passions; how the one was to be persuaded, the others to be raised or calmed; the places or repositories to which we may recur, when we want proper matter for any of these purposes. Besides all this, they studied sentiments and manners; what constitutes a work; what, a whole and parts; what, the essence of probable, and even of natural fiction, as contributing to constitute a just dramatic fable.

Harris.

§ 168. PLATO, ARISTOTLE, THEOPHRASTUS, and other GREEK Authors of Philosophical Criticism.

Much of this kind may be found in different parts of Plato. But Aristotle, his disciple, who may be called the systematizer of his master's doctrines, has, in his two treatises of poetry and rhetoric, with such wonderful penetration developed every part of the subject, that he may be justly called the Father of Criticism, both from the age when he lived, and from his truly transcendent genius. The criticism which this capital writer taught, has so intimate a correspondence and alliance with philosophy, that we can call it by no other name, than that of Philosophical Criticism.

To Aristotle succeeded his disciple Theophrastus, who followed his master's example in the study of criticism, as may be seen in the catalogue of his writings, preserved by Diogenes Laertius. But all the critical works of Theophrastus, as well as of many others, are now lost. The principal authors of the kind now remaining in Greek, are Demetrius of Phalera, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Dionysius Longinus, together with Hermogenes, Aphthonius, and a few others.

Of these the most masterly seems to be Demetrius, who was the earliest, and who appears to follow the precepts, and even the text of Aristotle, with far greater attention than any of the rest. His examples, it must be confessed, are sometimes obscure, but this we rather impute to the destructive hand of time, which has prevented us from seeing many of the original authors.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the next in order, may be said to have written with judgment upon the force of numerous composition, not to mention other tracts on the subject of oratory, and those also critical as well as historical. Longinus, who was in time far later than these, seems principally to have had in view the passions and the imagination, in the treating of which he has acquired a just applause, and expressed himself with a dignity suitable to the subject. The rest of the Greek critics, though they have said many useful things, have yet so minutely multiplied the rules of art, and so much confined themselves to the oratory of the tribunal, that they appear of no great service, as to good writing in general.

Ibid.

§ 169. Philosophical Critics among the ROMANS.

Among the Romans, the first critic of note was Cicero; who, though far below Aristotle in depth of philosophy, may be said, like him, to have exceeded all his countrymen. As his celebrated treatise concerning the Orator is written in dialogue, where the speakers introduced are the greatest men of his nation, we have incidentally an elegant sample of those manners, and that politeness, which were peculiar to the leading characters during the Roman commonwealth. There we may see the behaviour of free and accomplished men, before a baser address had set that standard, which has been too often taken for good breeding ever since.

Next to Cicero came Horace; who often, in other parts of his writings, acts the critic and scholar, but whose Art of Poetry is a standard of its kind, and too well known to need any encomium. After Horace arose Quintilian, Cicero's admirer and follower, who appears, by his works, not only learned and ingenious, but, what is still more, an honest and a worthy man. He likewise dwells too much upon the oratory of the tribunal, a fact no way surprising, when we consider the age in which he lived: an age when tyrannic government being the fashion of the times, that nobler species of eloquence, I mean the popular and deliberative, was, with all things truly liberal, degenerated and sunk. The later Latin rhetoricians there is no need to mention, as they little help to illustrate the subject in hand. I would only repeat, that the species of criticism here mentioned,

mentioned, as far at least as handled by the more able masters, is that which we have denominated Criticism Philosophical.

Harris.

§ 170. *Concerning the Progress of Criticism in its second Species, the Historical—GREEK and ROMAN Critics, by whom this Species of Criticism was cultivated.*

As to the Criticism already treated, we find it not confined to any one particular author, but containing general rules of art, either for judging or writing, confirmed by the example not of one author, but of many. But we know from experience, that, in process of time, languages, customs, manners, laws, governments, and religions, insensibly change. The Macedonian tyranny, after the fatal battle of Chæronea, wrought much of this kind in Greece: and the Roman tyranny, after the fatal battles of Pharsalia and Philippi, carried it throughout the known world. Hence, therefore, of things obsolete the names became obsolete also; and authors, who in their own age were intelligible and easy, in after days grew difficult and obscure. Here then we behold the rise of a second race of critics, the tribe of scholiasts, commentators, and explainers.

These naturally attached themselves to particular authors. Aristarchus, Didymus, Eustathius, and many others, bestowed their labours upon Homer; Proclus and Tzetzes upon Hesiod; the same Proclus and Olympiodorus upon Plato; Simplicius, Ammonius, and Philoponus, upon Aristotle; Ulpian upon Demosthenes; Macrobius and Asconius upon Cicero; Calliærgus upon Theocritus; Donatus upon Terence; Servius upon Virgil; Acro and Porphyrio upon Horace; and so with respect to others, as well philosophers as poets and orators. To these scholiasts may be added the several composers of Lexicons; such as Hesychius, Philoxenus, Suidas, &c. also the writers upon Grammar, such as Apollonius, Priscian, Sossipater, Charisius, &c. Now all these pains-taking men, considered together, may be said to have completed another species of criticism, a species which, in distinction to the former, we call Criticism Historical.

And thus things continued, though in a declining way, till, after many a severe and unsuccessful plunge, the Roman empire sunk through the west of Europe. Latin then soon lost its purity; Greek they hardly knew; Classics, and their Scho-

liasts, were no longer studied; and an age succeeded of legends and crusades.

Ibid.

§ 171. *Moderns eminent in the two Species of Criticism before mentioned, the Philosophical and the Historical—the last Sort of Critics more numerous—those, mentioned in this Section, confined to the GREEK and LATIN Languages.*

At length, after a long and barbarous period, when the shades of monkery began to retire, and the light of humanity once again to dawn, the arts also of criticism insensibly revived. 'Tis true, indeed, the authors of the philosophical sort (I mean that which respects the causes and principles of good writing in general) were not many in number. However, of this rank, among the Italians, were Vida, and the elder Scaliger; among the French were Rapin, Bouhours, Boileau, together with Bossu, the most methodic and accurate of them all. In our own country, our nobility may be said to have distinguished themselves; Lord Roscommon, in his Essay upon Translated Verse; the Duke of Buckingham, in his Essay on Poetry; and Lord Shaftsbury, in his treatise called Advice to an Author: to whom may be added, our late admired genius, Pope, in his truly elegant poem, the Essay upon Criticism.

The Discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds upon painting have, after a philosophical manner, investigated the principles of an art, which no one in practice has better verified than himself.

We have mentioned these discourses, not only from their merit, but as they incidentally teach us, that to write well upon a liberal art, we must write philosophically—that all the liberal arts in their principles are congenial—and that these principles, when traced to their common source, are found all to terminate in the first philosophy.

But to pursue our subject—However small among moderns may be the number of these Philosophical Critics, the writers of historical or explanatory criticism have been in a manner innumerable. To name, out of many, only a few—of Italy were Beroaldus, Ficinus, Victorius, and Robertellus; of the Higher and Lower Germany were Erasmus, Sylburgius, Le Clerc, and Fabricius; of France were Lambin, Du Vall, Harduin, Capperonierus; of England were Stanley (editor of Æschylus)

Gataker,

Gataker, Davies, Clark (editor of Homer) together with multitudes more from every region and quarter,

Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the
brooks
In Vallombrosa. —

But I fear I have given a strange catalogue, where we seek in vain for such illustrious personages, as Sesostris, Cyrus, Alexander, Cæsar, Attila, Tortila, Tamerlane, &c. The heroes of this work (if I may be pardoned for calling them so) have only aimed in retirement to present us with knowledge. Knowledge only was their object, not havock, nor devastation.

Harris.

§ 172. *Compilers of Lexicons and Dictionaries, and Authors upon Grammars.*

After Commentators and Editors, we must not forget the compilers of Lexicons and Dictionaries, such as Charles and Henry Stevens, Favorinus, Constantine, Budæus, Cooper, Faber, Vossius, and others. To these also we may add the authors upon Grammar; in which subject the learned Greeks, when they quitted the East, led the way, Moschopulus, Chrysoloras, Lascaris, Theodore Gaza; then in Italy, Laurentius Valla; in England, Grocin and Linacer; in Spain, Sanctius; in the Low Countries, Vossius; in France, Cæsar Scaliger by his residence, though by birth an Italian, together with those able writers Mess. de Port Roial. Nor ought we to omit the writers of Philological Epistles, such as Emanuel Martin; nor the writers of Literary Catalogues (in French called Catalogues Raisonnées) such as the account of the manuscripts in the imperial library at Vienna, by Lambecius; or of the Arabic manuscripts in the Escorial library, by Michael Casiri. *Ibid.*

§ 173. *Modern Critics of the Explanatory Kind, commenting modern Writers—Lexicographers—Grammarians—Translators.*

Though much historical explanation has been bestowed on the ancient Classics, yet have the authors of our own country by no means been forgotten, having exercised many critics of learning and ingenuity.

Mr. Thomas Warton (besides his fine edition of Theocritus) has given a curious history of English Poetry during the middle centuries; Mr. Tyrwhit, much accurate and diversified erudition upon Chau-

cer; Mr. Upton, a learned Comment on the Fairy Queen of Spenser; Mr. Addison, many polite and elegant Spectators on the Conduct and Beauties of the Paradise Lost; Dr. Warton, an Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope, a work filled with speculations, in a taste perfectly pure. The lovers of literature would not forgive me, were I to omit that ornament of her sex and country, the critic and patroness of our illustrious Shakespeare, Mrs. Montague. For the honour of criticism, not only the divines already mentioned, but others also, of rank still superior, have bestowed their labours upon our capital poets (Shakespeare, Milton, Cowley, Pope) suspending for a while their severer studies, to relax in these regions of genius and imagination.

The Dictionaries of Minshew, Skinner, Spelman, Sumner, Junius, and Johnson, are all well known, and justly esteemed. Such is the merit of the last, that our language does not possess a more copious, learned, and valuable work. For grammatical knowledge we ought to mention with distinction the learned prelate, Dr. Lowth, bishop of London; whose admirable tract on the Grammar of the English language, every lover of that language ought to study and understand, if he would write, or even speak it, with purity and precision.

Let my countrymen too reflect, that in studying a work upon this subject, they are not only studying a language in which it becomes them to be knowing, but a language which can boast of as many good books as any among the living or modern languages of Europe. The writers, born and educated in a free country, have been left for years to their native freedom. Their pages have been never defiled with an index expurgatorius, nor their genius ever shackled with the terrors of an inquisition.

May this invaluable privilege never be impaired either by the hand of power, or by licentious abuse! *Ibid.*

§ 174. *On Translators.*

Perhaps with the critics just described I ought to arrange Translators, if it be true that translation is a species of explanation, which differs no otherwise from explanatory comments, than that these attend to parts, while translation goes to the whole.

Now as translators are infinite, and many of them (to borrow a phrase from sportmen)

men) unqualified persons, I shall enumerate only a few, and those such as for their merits have been deservedly esteemed.

Of this number I may very truly reckon Meric Casaubon, the translator of Marcus Antoninus; Mrs. Carter, the translator of Epictetus; and Mr. Sydenham, the translator of many of Plato's Dialogues. All these seem to have accurately understood the original language from which they translated. But that is not all. The authors translated being philosophers, the translators appear to have studied the style of their philosophy, well knowing that in ancient Greece every sect of philosophy, like every science and art, had a language of its own.

To these may be added the respectable names of Melmoth and of Hampton, of Franklin and of Potter; nor should I omit a few others, whose labours have been similar, did I not recollect the trite, though elegant admonition:

—fugit irreparabile tempus,
Singula dum capti circumvectamur amore. VIRG.
Harris.

§ 175. *Rise of the third Species of Criticism, the Corrective—practised by the Ancients, but much more by the Moderns; and why.*

But we are now to enquire after another species of Criticism. All ancient books, having been preserved by transcription, were liable, through ignorance, negligence, or fraud, to be corrupted in three different ways, that is to say, by retrenchings, by additions, and by alterations.

To remedy these evils, a third sort of criticism arose, and that was Criticism Corrective. The business of this at first was painfully to collate all the various copies of authority, and then, from amidst the variety of readings thus collected, to establish, by good reasons, either the true, or the most probable. In this sense we may call such criticism not only corrective but authoritative.

As the number of these corruptions must needs have increased by length of time, hence it has happened that corrective criticism has become much more necessary in these later ages, than it was in others more ancient. Not but that even in ancient days various readings have been noted. Of this kind there are a multitude in the text of

Homer; a fact not singular, when we consider his great antiquity. In the Comments of Ammonius and Philoponus upon Aristotle, there is mention made of several in the text of that philosopher, which these his commentators compare and examine.

We find the same in Aulus Gellius, as to the Roman authors; where it is withal remarkable, that, even in that early period, much stress is laid upon the authority of ancient manuscripts, a reading in Cicero being justified from a copy made by his learned freed-man, Tiro: and a reading in Virgil's Georgics, from a book which had once belonged to Virgil's family.

But since the revival of literature, to correct has been a business of much more latitude, having continually employed, for two centuries and a half, both the pains of the most laborious, and the wits of the most acute. Many of the learned men before enumerated were not only famous as historical critics, but as corrective also. Such were the two Scaligers (of whom one has been already mentioned, § 171.) the two Casaubons, Salmosius, the Heinsii, Grævius, the Gronovii, Burman, Kuster, Wasse, Bentley, Pearce, and Markland. In the same class, and in a rank highly eminent, I place Mr. Toupe of Cornwall, who, in his Emendations upon Suidas, and his edition of Longinus, has shewn a critical acumen, and a compass of learning, that may justly arrange him with the most distinguished scholars. Nor must I forget Dr. Taylor, residentiary of St. Paul's, nor Mr. Upton, prebendary of Rochester. The former, by his edition of Demosthenes, (as far as he lived to carry it) by his *Lyfias*, by his *Comment on the Marmor Sandvicense*, and other critical pieces; the latter, by his correct and elegant edition, in Greek and Latin, of Arrian's *Epictetus* (the first of the kind that had any pretensions to be called complete) have rendered themselves, as Scholars, lasting ornaments of their country. These two valuable men were the friends of my youth; the companions of my social, as well as my literary hours. I admired them for their erudition; I loved them for their virtues; they are now no more—

His saltem accumulem donis, et fangar inani
Munere— VIRG.

Ibid.

* See Hermer, p. 269, 270.

§ 176.

§ 176. *Criticism may have been abused—yet defended, as of the last Importance to the Cause of Literature.*

But here was the misfortune of this last species of criticism. The best of things may pass into abuse. There were numerous corruptions in many of the finest authors, which neither ancient editions, nor manuscripts, could heal. What then was to be done?—Were forms so fair to remain disfigured, and be seen for ever under such apparent blemishes?—"No (says a critic,) Conjecture can cure all—Conjecture, whose performances are for the most part more certain than any thing that we can exhibit from the authority of manuscripts."—We will not ask, upon this wonderful assertion, how, if so certain, can it be called conjecture?—"Tis enough to observe (be it called as it may) that this spirit of conjecture has too often passed into an intemperate excess: and then, whatever it may have boasted, has done more mischief by far than good. Authors have been taken in hand, like anatomical subjects, only to display the skill and abilities of the artist; so that the end of many an edition seems often to have been no more than to exhibit the great sagacity and erudition of an editor. The joy of the task was the honour of mending, while corruptions were sought with a more than common attention, as each of them afforded a testimony to the editor and his art.

And here I beg leave, by way of digression, to relate a short story concerning a noted empiric. "Being once in a ball-room crowded with company, he was asked by a gentleman, what he thought of such a lady? was it not pity that she squinted?"—"Squint! Sir!" replied the doctor, "I wish every lady in the room squinted; there is not a man in Europe can cure squinting but myself."

But to return to our subject—well indeed would it be for the cause of letters, were this bold conjectural spirit confined to works of second rate, where, let it change, expunge, or add, as happens, it may be tolerably sure to leave matters, as they were; or if not much better, at least not much worse: but when the divine geniuses of higher rank, whom we not only applaud, but in a manner revere, when these come to be attempted by petulant correctors, and to be made the subject of their wanton caprice, how can we but exclaim, with a kind of religious abhorrence—

—procul! O! procul este profani!

These sentiments may be applied even to the celebrated Bentley. It would have become that able writer, though in literature and natural abilities among the first of his age, had he been more temperate in his criticism upon the *Paradise Lost*; had he not so repeatedly and injuriously offered violence to its author, from an affected superiority, to which he had no pretence. But the rage of conjecture seems to have seized him, as that of jealousy did Medea: a rage which she confess herself unable to resist, although she knew the mischiefs it would prompt her to perpetrate.

And now to obviate an unmerited censure, (as if I were an enemy to the thing, from being an enemy to its abuse) I would have it remembered, it is not either with criticism or critics that I presume to find fault. The arts, and its professors, while they practise it with temper, I truly honour; and think, that were it not for their acute and learned labours, we should be in danger of degenerating into an age of dunces.

Indeed critics (if I may be allowed the metaphor) are a sort of masters of the ceremony in the court of letters, through whose assistance we are introduced into some of the first and best company. Should we ever, therefore, by idle prejudices against pedantry, verbal accuracies, and we know not what, come to slight their art, and reject them from our favour, it is well if we do not slight also those Classics with whom criticism converses, becoming content to read them in translations, or (what is still worse) in translations of translations, or (what is worse even than that) not to read them at all. And I will be bold to assert, if that should ever happen, we shall speedily return into those days of darkness, out of which we happily emerged upon the revival of ancient literature. Harris.

§ 177. *The Epic Writers came first.*

It appears, that not only in Greece, but in other countries more barbarous, the first writings were in metre, and of an epic cast, recording wars, battles, heroes, ghosts; the marvellous always, and often the incredible. Men seemed to have thought, that the higher they soared the more important they should appear; and that the common life, which they then lived, was a thing too contemptible to merit imitation.

Hence it followed, that it was not till this common life was rendered respectable by more refined and polished manners, that men

men thought it might be copied, so as to gain them applause.

Even in Greece itself, tragedy had attained its maturity many years before comedy, as may be seen by comparing the age of Sophocles and Euripides with that of Philemon and Menander.

For ourselves, we shall find most of our first poets prone to a turgid bombast, and most of our first prosaic writers to a pedantic stiffness; which rude styles gradually improved, but reached not a classical purity sooner than Tillotson, Dryden, Addison, Shaftesbury, Prior, Pope, Atterbury, &c. &c.

Harris.

§ 178. *Nothing excellent in literary Performances happens from Chance.*

As to what is asserted soon after upon the efficacy of causes in works of ingenuity and art, we think in general, that the effect must always be proportioned to its cause. It is hard for him, who reasons attentively, to refer to chance any superlative production.

Effects indeed strike us, when we are not thinking about the cause; yet may we be assured, if we reflect, that a cause there is, and that too a cause intelligent and rational. Nothing would perhaps more contribute to give us a taste truly critical, than on every occasion to investigate this cause, and to ask ourselves, upon feeling any uncommon effect, why we are thus delighted; why thus affected; why melted into pity; why made to shudder with horror?

Till this *why* is well answered, all is darkness; and our admiration, like that of the vulgar, founded upon ignorance.

Ibid.

§ 179. *The Causes or Reasons of such Excellence.*

To explain, by a few examples, that are known to all, and for that reason here alledged, because they are known.

I am struck with the night scene in Virgil's fourth *Æneid*—"The universal silence throughout the globe—the sweet rest of its various inhabitants, soothing their cares and forgetting their labours—the unhappy Dido alone restless; restless, agitated with impetuous passions."—*Æn.* iv. 522.

I am affected with the story of Regulus, as painted by West—"The crowd of anxious friends, persuading him not to return—his wife fainting through sensibility and fear—persons the least con-

nected appearing to feel for him, yet himself unmoved, inexorable, and stern."

Horat. Carm. L. iii. Od. 5.

Without referring to these deeply tragic scenes, what charms has music, when a masterly band pass unexpectedly from loud to soft, or from soft to loud!—When the system changes from the greater third to the less; or reciprocally, when it changes from this last to the former.

All these effects have a similar and well known cause, the amazing force which contraries acquire, either by juxtaposition, or by quick succession.

Ibid.

§ 180. *Why Contraries have this Effect.*

But we ask still farther, Why have contraries this force?—We answer, Because, of all things which differ, none differ so widely. Sound differs from darkness, but not so much as from silence; darkness differs from sound, but not so much as from light. In the same intense manner differ repose and restlessness; felicity and misery; dubious solicitude and firm resolution: the epic and the comic; the sublime and the ludicrous.

And why differ contraries thus widely?—Because while attributes, simply different, may co-exist in the same subject, contraries cannot co-exist, but always destroy one another. Thus the same marble may be both white and hard: but the same marble cannot be both white and black. And hence it follows, that as their difference is more intense, so is our recognition of them more vivid, and our impressions more permanent.

This effect of contraries is evident even in objects of sense, where imagination and intellect are not in the least concerned. When we pass (for example) from a hot-house, we feel the common air more intensely cool; when we pass from a dark cavern, we feel the common light of the day more intensely glaring.

But to proceed to instances of another and a very different kind.

Few scenes are more affecting than the taking of Troy, as described in the second *Æneid*—"The apparition of Hector to Eneas, when asleep, announcing to him the commencement of that direful event—the distant lamentations, heard by Eneas as he awakes—his ascending the house-top, and viewing the city in flames—his friend Pentheus, escaped from destruction, and relating to him their wretched and deplorable condition—Eneas

"with

"with a few friends, rushing in to the thick—
 "est danger—their various success till
 "they all perish, but himself and two more
 "—the affecting scenes of horror and pity
 "and Priam's palace—a son slain at his father's feet; and the immediate massacre
 "of the old monarch himself—Eneas, on
 "seeing this, inspired with the memory of
 "his own father—his resolving to return
 "home, having now lost all his companions—his seeing Helen in the way, and
 "his design to dispatch so wicked a woman
 "—Venus interposing, and shewing him
 "(by removing the film from his eyes)
 "the most sublime, though most direful, of
 "all fights; the Gods themselves busied
 "in Troy's destruction; Neptune at one
 "employ, Juno at another, Pallas at a
 "third—It is not Helen (says Venus)
 "but the gods, that are the authors of
 "your country's ruin—it is their inclemency," &c.

Not less solemn and awful, though less leading to pity, is the commencement of the sixth *Eneid*—"The Sibyl's cavern—
 "her frantic gestures, and prophecy—the
 "request of Eneas to descend to the shades
 "—her answer, and information about the
 "loss of one of his friends—the fate of
 "poor Misenus—his funeral—the golden
 "bough discovered, a preparatory circumstance for the descent—the sacrifice
 "—the ground bellowing under their feet
 "—the woods in motion—the dogs of Hecate howling—the actual descent, in all
 "its particulars of the marvellous, and the
 "terrible."

If we pass from an ancient author to a modern, what scene more striking than the first scene in *Hamlet*?—"The solemnity
 "of the time, a severe and pinching night
 "—the solemnity of the place, a platform
 "for a guard—the guards themselves;
 "and their opposite discourse—yonder star
 "in such a position; the bell then beating
 "one—when description is exhausted,
 "the thing itself appears, the Ghost enters."

From Shakespeare the transition to Milton is natural. What pieces have ever met a more just, as well as universal applause, than his *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*?—The first, a combination of every incident that is lively and cheerful; the second, of every incident that is melancholy and serious: the materials of each collected, according to their character, from rural life, from city life, from music, from poetry; in a word, from every part of nature, and every part of art.

To pass from poetry to painting—the Crucifixion of Polycrates by Salvator Rosa, is "a most affecting representation of
 "various human figures, seen under different modes of horror and pity, as they
 "contemplate a dreadful spectacle, the
 "crucifixion above-mentioned." The Aurora of Guido, on the other side, is
 "one of those joyous exhibitions, where
 "nothing is seen but youth and beauty, in
 "every attitude of elegance and grace." The former picture in poetry would have been a deep *Penseroso*; the latter, a most pleasing and animated *Allegro*.

And to what cause are we to refer these last enumerations of striking effects?

To a very different one from the former—not to an opposition of contrary incidents, but to a concatenation or accumulation of many that are similar and congenial.

And why have concatenation and accumulation such a force?—From these most simple and obvious truths, that many things similar, when added together will be more in quantity than any of them taken singly;—consequently, that the more things are thus added, the greater will be their effect.

We have mentioned, at the same time, both accumulation and concatenation; because in painting, the objects, by existing at once, are accumulated; in poetry, as they exist by succession, they are not accumulated but concatenated. Yet, through memory and imagination, even these also derive an accumulative force, being preserved from passing away by those admirable faculties, till, like many pieces of metal melted together, they collectively form one common magnitude.

It must be farther remembered, there is an accumulation of things analogous, even when those things are the objects of different faculties. For example—As are passionate gestures to the eye, so are passionate tones to the ear; so are passionate ideas to the imagination. To feel the amazing force of an accumulation like this, we must see some capital actor, acting the drama of some capital poet, where all the powers of both are assembled at the same instant.

And thus have we endeavoured, by a few obvious and easy examples, to explain what we mean by the words, "seeking the cause
 "or reason, as often as we feel works of
 "art and ingenuity to affect us."—See
 § 167. 178.

Harris

§ 181. *Advice to a Beginner in the Art of Criticism.*

If I might advise a beginner in this elegant pursuit, it should be, as far as possible, to recur for principles to the most plain and simple truths, and to extend every theorem, as he advances, to its utmost latitude, so as to make it suit, and include, the greatest number of possible cases.

I would advise him farther, to avoid subtle and far-fetched refinement, which, as it is for the most part adverse to perspicuity and truth, may serve to make an able Sophist, but never an able Critic.

A word more—I would advise a young Critic, in his contemplations, to turn his eye rather to the praise-worthy than the blameable; that is, to investigate the causes of praise, rather than the causes of blame. For though an uninformed beginner may, in a single instance, happen to blame properly, it is more than probable, that in the next he may fail, and incur the censure passed upon the criticising cobbler, *Ne sutor alia crepidam.* Harris.

§ 182. *On numerous Composition.*

As Numerous Composition arises from a just arrangement of words, so is that arrangement just, when formed upon their verbal quantity.

Now if we seek for this verbal quantity in Greek and Latin, we shall find that, while those two languages were in purity, their verbal quantity was in purity also. Every syllable had a measure of time, either long or short, defined with precision either by its constituent vowel, or by the relation of that vowel to other letters adjoining. Syllables thus characterized, when combined, made a foot; and feet thus characterized, when combined, made a verse: so that while a particular harmony existed in every part, a general harmony was diffused through the whole.

Pronunciation at this period being, like other things, perfect, accent and quantity were accurately distinguished; of which distinction, familiar then, though now obscure, we venture to suggest the following explanation. We compare quantity to musical tones differing in long and short, as upon whatever line they stand, a semibrief differs from a minim. We compare accent to musical tones differing in high and low, as D upon the third line differs from G upon the first, be its length the same, or be it longer or shorter.

And thus things continued for a succession of centuries, from Homer and Hesiod to Virgil and Horace, during which interval, if we add a trifle to its end, all the truly classical poets, both Greek and Latin, flourished.

Nor was prose at the same time neglected. Penetrating wits discovered this also to be capable of numerous composition, and founded their ideas upon the following reasonings:

Though they allowed that prose should not be strictly metrical (for then it would be no longer prose, but poetry); yet at the same time they asserted, if it had no Rhythm at all, such a vague effusion would of course fatigue, and the reader would seek in vain for those returning pauses, so helpful to his reading, and so grateful to his ear. *Ibid.*

§ 183. *On other Decorations of Prose besides Prosæic Feet; as Alliteration.*

Besides the decoration of Prosæic Feet, there are other decorations, admissible into English composition, such as Alliteration, and Sentences, especially the Period.

First therefore for the first; I mean Alliteration.

Among the classics of old, there is no finer illustration of this figure, than Lucretius's description of those blest abodes, where his gods, detached from providential cares, ever lived in the fruition of divine serenity:

Apparet divum numen, sedesque quietæ,
Quas neque concutiunt venti, neque nubila nim-
bis
Aspergunt, neque nix acri conereta pruina
Cana cadens violat, semperque innubilis æther
Integit, et large diffuso lumine ridet.

Lucret. III. 18.

The sublime and accurate Virgil did not condemn this decoration, though he used it with such pure, unaffected simplicity, that we often feel its force without contemplating the cause. Take one instance out of infinite, with which his works abound:

Aurora interra miseris mortalibus almam
Extulerat lucem, referens opera atque labores.
Æn. XI. v. 183.

To Virgil we may add the superior authority of Homer:

Ἦτοι δὲ καμπύλον τὸ Ἀλκίον ὅς ἑ Ἀλκίον,
Ὅν Συμεὶν κατέδωκε πᾶσι τοῖς Ἀδριακοῖς Ἀλκίον.
Il. ζ. 201.

Hermogenes, the rhetorician, when he quotes these lines, quotes them as an example

ample of the figure here mentioned, but calls it by a Greek name, ΠΑΡΗΧΗΤΗΣ.

Cicero has translated the above verses elegantly, and given us too Alliteration, though not under the same letters:

Qui miser in campis errabat solus Alais,
Ipse suum cor edens, hominum vestigia vitans.

Cic.

Aristotle knew this figure, and called it ΠΑΡΟΜΟΙΩΣΙΣ, a name perhaps not so precise as the other, because it rather expresses resemblance in general, than that which arises from sound in particular. His example is—ΑΤΡΟΝ γὰρ ἰλαῖον, ΑΤΡΟΝ τὰς αὐτῶν.

The Latin rhetoricians styled it Annomination, and give us examples of similar character.

But the most singular fact is, that so early in our own history, as the reign of Henry the second, this decoration was esteemed and cultivated both by the English and the Welsh. So we are informed by Giraldus Cambrensis, a contemporary writer, who, having first given the Welsh instance, subjoins the English in the following verse—

God is together Gammen and Wisedóme.

—that is, God is at once both joy and wisdom.

He calls the figure by the Latin name Annomination, and adds, "that the two nations were so attached to this verbal ornament in every high-finished composition, that nothing was by them esteemed elegantly delivered, no diction considered but as rude and rustic, if it were not first amply refined with the polishing art of this figure."

'Tis perhaps from this national taste of ours, that we derive many proverbial similes, which, if we except the sound, seem to have no other merit—Fine as five-pence—Round as a Robin—&c.

Even Spenser and Shakespeare adopted the practice, but then it was in a manner suitable to such geniuses.

Spenser says—

For not to have been dipt in Lethe lake
Could save the son of Thetis from to die;
But that blind bard did him immortal make
With verses dipt in dew of Castille.

Shakespeare says—

Had my sweet Harry had but half their numbers,
This day might I, hanging on Hotspur's neck,
Have talked, &c.—Hen. IVth, Part 2d, Act. 2d.

Milton followed them.

For eloquence, the soul; song charms the sense.
P. L. II. 556.

and again,

Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheav'd
His vastness— P. L. VII. 477.

From Dryden we select one example out of many, for no one appears to have employed this figure more frequently, or, like Virgil, with greater simplicity and strength.

Better to hunt in fields for health unbought,
Than see the doctor for a nauseous draught.
The wife for cure on exercise depend;
God never made his work for man to mend.

DRYD. Fables.

Pope sings in his Dunciad—

'Twas chatt'ring, grinning, mouthing, jabb'ring
all;
And nollie, and Norton; brangling, and Brevall;
Dennis, and dissonance—

Which lines, though truly poetical and humorous, may be suspected by some to shew their art too conspicuously, and too nearly to resemble that verse of old Ennius—

O! tite, tute, tati, tibi tanta, tyranne, tulisti.
Script. ad. Herenn. l. iv. c. 18.

Gray begins a sublime Ode,

Ruin seize thee, ruthless king, &c.

We might quote also Alliterations from prose writers, but those we have alledged we think sufficient. Harris.

§ 184. On the Period.

Nor is elegance only to be found in single words, or in single feet; it may be found, when we put them together, in our peculiar mode of putting them. 'Tis out of words and feet thus compounded, that we form sentences, and among sentences none so striking, none so pleasing as the Period. The reason is, that, while other sentences are indefinite, and (like a geometrical right line) may be produced indefinitely, the Period (like a circular line) is always circumscribed, returns, and terminates at a given point. In other words, while other sentences, by the help of common copulatives, have a sort of boundless effusion; the constituent parts of a Period have a sort of reflex union, in which union the sentence is so far complete, as neither to require, nor even to admit, a farther extension. Readers find a pleasure in this grateful

grateful circuit, which leads them so agreeably to an acquisition of knowledge.

The author, if he may be permitted, would refer by way of illustration, to the beginnings of his *Hermes*, and his philosophical arrangements, where some attempts have been made in this periodical style. He would refer also, for much more illustrious examples, to the opening of *Cicero's Offices*; to that of the capital Oration of *Demosthenes* concerning the Crown; and to that of the celebrated *Panegyric*, made (if he may be so called) by the father of *Periods*, *Isocrates*.

Again—every compound sentence is compounded of other sentences more simple, which compared to one another, have a certain proportion of length. Now it is in general a good rule, that among these constituent sentences, the last (if possible) should be equal to the first; or if not equal, then rather longer than shorter. The reason is, that without a special cause, abrupt conclusions are offensive, and the reader, like a traveller quietly pursuing his journey, finds an unexpected precipice, where he is disagreeably stop.

Harris.

§ 185. On Monosyllables.

It has been called a fault in our language, that it abounds in Monosyllables. As these, in too lengthened a suite, disgrace a composition, *Lord Shaftesbury*, (who studied purity of style with great attention) limited their number to nine; and was careful in his characteristics, to conform to his own law. Even in Latin too many of them were condemned by *Quintilian*.

Above all, care should be had, that a sentence end not with a crowd of them, those especially of the vulgar, untunable sort, such as, "to set it up," to "get by and by at it," &c. for these disgrace a sentence that may be otherwise laudable, and are like the rabble at the close of some pompous cavalcade.

Ibid.

§ 186. Authorities alledged.

'Twas by these and other arts of similar sort, that authors in distant ages have cultivated their style. Looking upon knowledge (if I may be allowed the allusion) to pass into the mansions of the mind through language, they were careful (if I may pursue the metaphor) not to offend in the vestibule. They did not esteem it pardonable to despise the public ear, when

they saw the love of numbers so universally diffused.

Nor were they discouraged, as if they thought their labour would be lost. In these more refined but yet popular arts, they knew the amazing difference between the power to execute, and the power to judge:—that to execute was the joint effort of genius and of habit; a painful acquisition, only attainable by the few;—to judge, the simple effort of that plain but common sense, imparted by Providence in some degree to every one.

Ibid.

§ 187. Objectors answered.

But here methinks an objector demands—"And are authors then to compose, and form their treatises by rule?—Are they to balance periods?—To scan pæans and cretics?—To affect alliterations?—To enumerate monosyllables?" &c.

If, in answer to this objector, it should be said, They ought; the permission should at least be tempered with much caution. These arts are to be so blended with a pure but common style, that the reader, as he proceeds, may only feel their latent force. If ever they become glaring, they degenerate into affectation; an extreme more disgusting, because less natural, than even the vulgar language of an unpolished clown. 'Tis in writing, as in acting—The best writers are like our late admired *Garrick*—And how did that able genius employ his art?—Not by a vain ostentation of any one of his powers, but by a latent use of them all in such an exhibition of nature, that while we were present in a theatre, and only beholding an actor, we could not help thinking ourselves in *Denmark* with *Hamlet*, or in *Bosworth field* with *Richard*.

Ibid.

§ 188. When the Habit is once gained, nothing so easy as Practice.

There is another objection still.—These speculations may be called minutæ; things partaking at best more of the elegant than of the solid; and attended with difficulties beyond the value of the labour.

To answer this, it may be observed, that when habit is once gained, nothing so easy as practice. When the ear is once habituated to these verbal rhythms, it forms them spontaneously, without attention or labour. If we call for instances, what more easy to every smith, to every carpenter, to every common mechanic, than the

the several energies of their proper arts? How little do even the rigid laws of verse obstruct a genius truly poetic? How little did they cramp a Milton, a Dryden, or a Pope? Cicero writes that Antipater the Sidonian could pour forth Hexameters extempore, and that, whenever he chose to verify, words followed him of course. We may add to Antipater the ancient Rhapsodists of the Greeks, and the modern Improvisatori of the Italians. If this then be practicable in verse, how much more so in prose? In prose, the laws of which so far differ from those of poetry, that we can at any time relax them as we find expedient? Nay more, where to relax them is not only expedient, but even necessary, because, though numerous composition may be a requisite, yet regularly returning rhythm is a thing we should avoid.

Harris.

§ 189. *In every Whole; the constituent Parts, and the Facility of their Coincidence, merit our Regard.*

In every whole, whether natural or artificial, the constituent parts well merit our regard, and in nothing more than in the facility of their coincidence. If we view a landscape, how pleasing the harmony between hills and woods, between rivers, and lawns! If we select from this landscape a tree, how well does the trunk correspond with its branches, and the whole of its form, with its beautiful verdure! If we take an animal, for example a fine horse what a union in his colour, his figure and his motions! If one of human race, what more pleasingly congenial, than when virtue and genius appear to animate a graceful figure?

— pulchro veniens e corpore virtus?

The charm increases, if to a graceful figure we add a graceful elocution. Elocution too is heightened still, if it convey elegant sentiments; and these again are heightened, if cloathed with graceful diction, that is, with words which are pure, precise, and well arranged.

Ibid.

§ 190. *Verbal Decorations not to be called Minutiae.*

We must not call these verbal decorations, minutiae. They are essential to the beauty, nay, to the completion of the whole. Without them the composition, though its sentiments may be just, is like a picture with good drawing, but with bad and defective colouring.

These we are assured were the sentiments of Cicero, whom we must allow to have been a master in his art, and who has amply and accurately treated verbal decoration and numerous composition, in no less than two capital treatises, (his *Orator*, and his *De Oratore*) strengthening withal his own authority with that of Aristotle and Theophrastus; to whom, if more were wanting, we might add the names of Demetrius Phalereus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Dionysius Longinus, and Quintilian.

Ibid.

§ 191. *Advice to Readers.*

Whoever reads a perfect or finished composition, whatever be the language, whatever the subject, should read it, even if alone, both audibly and distinctly.

In a composition of this character, not only precise words are admitted, but words metaphorical and ornamental. And farther—as every sentence contains a latent harmony, so is that harmony derived from the rhythm of its constituent parts.

A composition then like this, should (as I said before) be read both distinctly and audibly; with due regard to stops and pauses; with occasional elevations and depressions of the voice, and whatever else constitutes just and accurate pronunciation. He who, despising or neglecting, or knowing nothing of all this, reads a work of such character as he would read a sessions-paper, will not only miss many beauties of the style, but will probably miss which (is worse) a large proportion of the sense.

Ibid.

§ 192. *Every Whole should have a Beginning, a Middle, and an End. The Theory exemplified in the Georgics of Virgil.*

Let us take for an example the most highly finished performance among the Romans, and that in their most polished period, I mean the *Georgics* of Virgil:

Quid faciat lætas segetes, quo sidere terram
Vertere, Mæcenas, (11) ulmisque adungere vites
Conveniat; (111) quæ cura bovm, qui cultus habendo
Sit pecori; (1v) apibus quanta experientia parcis,
Hinc canere incipiam, &c.—Virg. *Georg.* I.

In these lines, and so on (if we consult the original) for forty-two lines inclusive, we have the beginning; which beginning includes two things, the plan, and the invocation.

In the four first verses we have the plan, which plan gradually opens and becomes

the whole work, as an acorn, when developed, becomes a perfect oak. After this comes the invocation, which extends to the last of the forty-two verses above-mentioned. The two together give us the true character of a beginning, which, as above described, nothing can precede, and which it is necessary that something should follow.

The remaining part of the first book, together with the three books following, to verse the 458th of book the fourth, make the middle, which also has its true character, that of succeeding the beginning, where we expect something farther; and that of preceding the end, where we expect nothing more.

The eight last verses of the poem make the end, which, like the beginning, is short, and which preserves its real character, by satisfying the reader that all is complete, and that nothing is to follow. The performance is even dated. It finishes like an epistle, giving us the place and time of writing; but then giving them in such a manner, as they ought to come from Virgil.

But to open our thoughts into a farther detail.

As the poem, from its very name, respects various matters relative to land, (*Georgica*) and which are either immediately or mediately connected with it; among the variety of these matters the poem begins from the lowest, and thence advances gradually from higher to higher, till, having reached the highest, it there properly stops.

The first book begins from the simple culture of the earth, and from its humblest progeny, corn, legumes, flowers, &c.

It is a nobler species of vegetables which employs the second book, where we are taught the culture of trees, and, among others, of that important pair, the olive and the vine. Yet it must be remembered, that all this is nothing more than the culture of mere vegetable and inanimate nature.

It is in the third book that the poet rises to nature sensitive and animated, when he gives us precepts about cattle, horses, sheep, &c.

At length, in the fourth book, when matters draw to a conclusion, then it is he treats his subject in a moral and political way. He no longer pursues the culture of the mere brute nature; he then describes, as he tells us

— *Mores, et studia, et populos, et prœlia, &c.*

for such is the character of his bees, those truly social and political animals. It is here he first mentions arts, and memory, and laws, and families. It is here (their great sagacity considered) he supposes a portion imparted of a sublimer principle. It is here that every thing vegetable or merely brutal seems forgotten, while all appears at least human, and sometimes, even divine:

*Hic quidam signis, atque hæc exempla secuti,
Esse apibus partem divinæ mentis, et haustus
Ætherios dixere; deum namque ire per omnes
Terralque trausque maris, &c.*

Georg. IV. 219.

When the subject will not permit him to proceed farther, he suddenly conveys his reader, by the fable of *Aristæus*, among nymphs, heroes, demi-gods, and gods, and thus leaves him in company supposed more than mortal.

This is not only a sublime conclusion to the fourth book, but naturally leads to the conclusion of the whole work; for he does no more after this than shortly recapitulate, and elegantly blend his recapitulating with a compliment to Augustus.

But even this is not all.

The dry, didactic character of the *Georgics*, made it necessary they should be enlivened by episodes and digressions. It has been the art of the poet, that these episodes and digressions should be homogeneous: that is, should so connect with the subject, as to become, as it were, parts of it. On these principles every book has for its end, what I call an epilogue; for its beginning, an invocation; and for its middle, the several precepts relative to its subject, I mean husbandry. Having a beginning, a middle, and an end, every part itself becomes a smaller whole, though with respect to the general plan, it is nothing more than a part. Thus the human arm, with a view to its elbow, its hands, its fingers, &c. is as clearly a whole, as it is simply but a part with a view to the entire body.

The smaller wholes of this divine poem may merit some attention; by these I mean each particular book.

Each book has an invocation. The first invokes the sun, the moon, the various rural deities, and lastly Augustus: the second invokes *Bacchus*; the third, *Pales* and *Apollo*; the fourth his patron *Mæcenas*. I do not dwell on these invocations, much less on the parts which follow, for this in fact would be writing a comment upon the poem. But the Epilogues, besides their

their own intrinsic beauty, are too much to our purpose to be passed in silence.

In the arrangement of them the poet seems to have pursued such an order, as that alternate affections should be alternately excited; and this he has done, well knowing the importance of that generally acknowledged truth, "the force derived to contraries by their juxtaposition or succession *." The first book ends with those portents and prodigies, both upon earth and in the heavens, which preceded the death of the dictator Cæsar. To these direful scenes the epilogue of the second book opposes the tranquillity and felicity of the rural life, which (as he informs us) faction and civil discord do not usually impair—

Non res Romanæ, perituraque regna—

In the ending of the third book we read of a pestilence, and of nature in devastation; in the fourth, of nature restored, and, by help of the gods, replenished.

As this concluding epilogue (I mean the fable of Aristæus) occupies the most important place; so is it decorated accordingly with language, events, places, and personages.

No language was ever more polished and harmonious. The descent of Aristæus to his mother, and of Orpheus to the shades, are events; the watery palace of the Nereides, the cavern of Proteus, and the scene of the infernal regions, are places; Aristæus, old Proteus, Orpheus, Eurydice, Cyllene, and her nymphs, are personages; all great, all striking, all sublime.

Let us view these epilogues in the poet's order.

I. Civil Horrors.

II. Rural Tranquillity.

III. Nature laid waste.

IV. Nature restored.

Here, as we have said already, different passions are, by the subjects being alternate, alternately excited; and yet withal excited so judiciously, that when the poem concludes, and all is at an end, the reader leaves off with tranquillity and joy.

Harris.

§ 193. Exemplified again in the *Menæxenus* of PLATO.

From the *Georgics* of Virgil we proceed to the *Menæxenus* of Plato; the first being the most finished form of a didactic

poem, the latter the most consummate model of a panegyric oration.

The *Menæxenus* is a funeral oration in praise of those brave Athenians, who had fallen in battle by generously asserting the cause of their country. Like the *Georgics*, and every other just composition, this oration has a beginning, a middle, and an end.

The beginning is a solemn account of the deceased having received all the legitimate rights of burial, and of the propriety of doing them honour not only by deeds but by words; that is, not only by funeral ceremonies, but by a speech, to perpetuate the memory of their magnanimity, and to recommend it to their posterity, as an object of imitation.

As the deceased were brave and gallant men, we are shewn by what means they came to possess their character, and what noble exploits they perform in consequence.

Hence the middle of the oration contains first their origin; next their education and form of government; and last of all, the consequence of such an origin and education; their heroic achievements from the earliest days to the time then present.

The middle part being thus complete, we come to the conclusion, which is perhaps the most sublime piece of oratory, both for the plan and execution, which is extant, of any age, or in any language.

By an awful prosopopeia, the deceased are called up to address the living; and fathers slain in battle, to exhort their living children; the children slain in battle, to console their living fathers; and this with every idea of manly consolation, with every generous incentive to a contempt of death, and a love of their country, that the powers of nature or of art could suggest.

'Tis here this oration concludes, being (as we have shewn) a perfect whole, executed with all the strength of a sublime language, under the management of a great and a sublime genius.

If these speculations appear too dry, they may be rendered more pleasing, if the reader would peruse the two pieces criticized. His labour, he might be assured, would not be lost, as he would peruse two of the finest pieces which the two finest ages of antiquity produced. *Ibid.*

* See before, § 179.

§ 194. *The Theory of Whole and Parts concerns small Works as well as great.*

We cannot however quit this theory concerning whole and parts, without observing that it regards alike both small works and great; and that it descends even to an essay, to a sonnet, to an ode. These minuter efforts of genius, unless they possess (if I may be pardoned the expression) a certain character of Totality, lose a capital pleasure derived from their union; from a union which, collected in a few pertinent ideas, combines them all happily under one amicable form. Without this union, the production is no better than a sort of vague effusion, where sentences follow sentences, and stanzas follow stanzas, with no apparent reason why they should be two rather than twenty, or twenty rather than two.

If we want another argument for this minuter Totality, we may refer to nature, which art is said to imitate. Not only this universe is one stupendous whole, but such also is a tree, a shrub, a flower; such those beings which, without the aid of glasses, even escape our perception. And so much for Totality (I venture to familiarize the term) that common and essential character to every legitimate composition.

Harris.

§ 195. *On Accuracy.*

There is another character left, which, though foreign to the present purpose, I venture to mention; and that is the character of Accuracy. Every work ought to be as accurate as possible. And yet, though this apply to works of every kind, there is a difference whether the work be great or small. In greater works (such as histories, epic poems, and the like) their very magnitude excuses incidental defects; and their authors, according to Horace, may be allowed to slumber. It is otherwise in smaller works, for the very reason that they are smaller. Such, through every part, both in sentiment and diction, should be perspicuous, pure, simple, and precise.

Ibid.

§ 196. *On Diction.*

As every sentiment must be expressed by words; the theory of sentiment naturally leads to that of Diction. Indeed, the connection between them is so intimate, that the same sentiment, where the diction differs, is as different in appearance, as the

same person, dressed like a peasant, or dressed like a gentleman. And hence we see how much diction merits a serious attention.

But this perhaps will be better understood by an example. Take then the following—"Don't let a lucky hit slip; if you do, be-like you mayn't any more get at it." The sentiment (we must confess) is expressed clearly, but the diction surely is rather vulgar and low. Take it another way—"Opportune moments are few and fleeting; seize them with avidity, or your progression will be impeded." Here the diction, though not low, is rather obscure. The words are unusual, pedantic, and affected.—But what says Shakespeare?—

There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows—

Here the diction is elegant, without being vulgar or affected; the words, though common, being taken under a metaphor, are so far estranged by this metaphorical use, that they acquire, through the change, a competent dignity, and yet, without becoming vulgar, remain intelligible and clear.

Ibid.

§ 197. *On the Metaphor.*

Knowing the stress laid by the ancient critics on the Metaphor, and viewing its admirable effects in the decorating of Diction, we think it may merit a farther regard.

There is not perhaps any figure of speech so pleasing as the Metaphor. It is at times the language of every individual, but above all, is peculiar to the man of genius. His sagacity discerns not only common analogies, but those others more remote, which escape the vulgar, and which, though they seldom invent, they seldom fail to recognize, when they hear them from persons more ingenious than themselves.

It has been ingeniously observed, that the Metaphor took its rise from the poverty of language. Men, not finding upon every occasion words ready made for their ideas, were compelled to have recourse to words analogous, and transfer them from their original meaning to the meaning then required. But though the Metaphor began in poverty, it did not end there. When the analogy was just (and this often happened) there was something peculiarly pleasing in what was both new, and yet familiar; so that the Metaphor was then cultivated, not out of necessity, but for ornament.

ament. It is thus that cloaths were first assumed to defend us against the cold, but came afterwards to be worn for distinction and decoration.

It must be observed, there is a force in the united words, *new* and *familiar*. What is new, but not familiar, is often unintelligible; what is familiar, but not new, is no better than common-place. It is in the union of the two, that the obscure and the vulgar are happily removed; and it is in this union, that we view the character of a just Metaphor.

But after we have so praised the Metaphor, it is fit at length we should explain what it is; and this we shall attempt, as well by a description, as by examples.

"A Metaphor is the transferring of a word from its usual meaning to an analogous meaning, and then the employing it agreeably to such transfer." For example, the usual meaning of evening is the conclusion of the day. But age too is a conclusion; the conclusion of human life. Now there being an analogy in all conclusions, we arrange in order the two we have alledged, and say, that, as evening is to the day, so is age to human life. Hence, by an easy permutation, (which furnishes at once two metaphors) we say alternately, that evening is the age of the day; and that age is the evening of life.

There are other metaphors equally pleasing, but which we only mention, as their analogy cannot be mistaken. It is thus that old men have been called stubble; and the stage, or theatre, the mirror of human life.

In language of this sort there is a double satisfaction: it is strikingly clear; and yet raised, though clear, above the low and vulgar idiom. It is a praise too of such metaphors, to be quickly comprehended. The similitude and the thing illustrated are commonly dispatched in a single word, and comprehended by an immediate and instantaneous intuition.

Thus a person of wit, being dangerously ill, was told by his friends, two more physicians were called in. So many! says he—do they fire then in platoons?—

Harris.

§ 198. *What Metaphors the best.*

These instances may assist us to discover what metaphors may be called the best.

They ought not, in an elegant and polite style (the style of which we are speaking; to be derived from meanings too sublime)

for then the diction would be turgid and bombast. Such was the language of that poet who, describing the footman's flambeaux at the end of an opera, sung or said,

Now blaz'd a thousand flaming sons, and bade
Grim night retire——

Nor ought a metaphor to be far-fetched, for then it becomes an enigma. It was thus a gentleman once puzzled his country friend, in telling him, by way of compliment, that he was become a perfect centaur. His honest friend knew nothing of centaurs, but being fond of riding, was hardly ever off his horse.

Another extreme remains, the reverse of the too sublime, and that is, the transferring from subjects too contemptible. Such was the case of that poet quoted by Horace, who to describe winter, wrote——

Jupiter hybernas canâ nive conspuit Alpes.

(Hor. L. II. Sat. 5.)

O'er the cold Alps Jove spits his hoary snow.

Nor was that modern poet more fortunate, whom Dryden quotes, and who, trying his genius upon the same subject, supposed winter——

To periwig with snow the baldpate woods.

With the same class of wits we may arrange that pleasant fellow, who, speaking of an old lady whom he had affronted, gave us in one short sentence no less than three choice metaphors. I perceive (said he) her back is up;—I must curry favour—or the fat will be in the fire.

Nor can we omit that the same word, when transferred to the same subjects, produces metaphors very different, as to propriety or impropriety.

It is with propriety that we transfer the words *to embrace*, from human beings to things purely ideal. The metaphor appears just, when we say, to embrace a proposition; to embrace an offer; to embrace an opportunity. Its application perhaps was not quite so elegant, when the old steward wrote to his lord, upon the subject of his farm, that, "if he met any oxen, he would not fail to embrace them."

If then we are to avoid the turgid, the enigmatic, and the base or ridiculous, no other metaphors are left, but such as may be described by negatives; such as are neither turgid, nor enigmatic, nor base and ridiculous.

Such is the character of many metaphors already alledged; among others that of Shakespeare's, where tides are transferred to speedy and determined conduct.

Nor does his Wolsey with less propriety moralize upon his fall, in the following beautiful metaphor, taken from vegetable nature :

This is the state of man ; to-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hope ; to-morrow blossoms,
And bears his blushing honours thick upon him ;
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,
And—— nips his root——

In such metaphors (besides their intrinsic elegance) we may say the reader is flattered ; I mean flattered by being left to discover something for himself.

There is one observation, which will at the same time shew both the extent of this figure, and how natural it is to all men.

There are metaphors so obvious, and of course so naturalized, that, ceasing to be metaphors, they become (as it were) the proper words. It is after this manner we say, a sharp fellow ; a great orator ; the foot of a mountain ; the eye of a needle ; the bed of a river ; to ruminate, to ponder, to edify, &c. &c.

These we by no means reject, and yet the metaphors we require we wish to be something more, that is, to be formed under the respectable conditions here established.

We observe too, that a singular use may be made of metaphors either to exalt or to depreciate, according to the sources from which we derive them. In ancient story, Orestes was by some called the murderer of his mother ; by others, the avenger of his father. The reasons will appear, by referring to the fact. The poet Simonides was offered money to celebrate certain mules, that had won a race. The sum being pitiful, he said, with disdain, he should not write upon demi-asses—A more competent sum was offered, he then began,

Hail ! Daughters of the generous horse,
That skim, like wind, along the course.

There are times, when, in order to exalt, we may call beggars, petitioners ; and pick-pockets, collectors : other times, when, in order, to depreciate, we may call petitioners, beggars ; and collectors, pick-pockets.—But enough of this.

We say no more of metaphors, but that it is a general caution with regard to every species, not to mix them, and that more particularly, if taken from subjects which are contrary.

Such was the case of that orator, who once asserted in his oration, that—"If cold

"sure, it would kindle a flame, that would
"obscure the lustre." &c. &c. Harris.

§ 199. On Enigmas and Puns.

A word remains upon Enigmas and Puns. It shall indeed be short, because, though they resemble the metaphor, it is as brass and copper resemble gold.

A pun seldom regards meaning, being chiefly confined to sound.

Horace gives a sad example of this spurious wit, where (as Dryden humorously translates it) he makes Persius the buffoon exhort the patriot Brutus to kill Mr. King, that is, Rupilius Rex, because Brutus, when he slew Cæsar, had been accustomed to king-killing :

Hunc Regem occide ; operum hoc mihi crede
tuorum est. Horat. Sat. Lib. I. VII.

We have a worse attempt in Homer, where Ulysses makes Polypheme believe his name was OTTIE, and where the dull Cyclops, after he had lost his eye, upon being asked by his brethren, who had done him so much mischief, replies it was done by OTTIE, that is, by nobody.

Enigmas are of a more complicated nature, being involved either in pun, or metaphor, or sometimes in both :

Ἀνδρῶν στυγὲ χαλεκὴν ἐν' ἀνὴρ καλλέσσεντα.

I saw a man, who, unprovok'd with ire,
Struck brass upon another's back by fire.

This enigma is ingenious, and means the operation of cupping, performed in ancient days by a machine of brass.

In such fancies, contrary to the principles of good metaphor and good writing, a perplexity is caused, not by accident but by design, and the pleasure lies in the being able to resolve it. *Ibid.*

§ 200. Rules defended.

Having mentioned Rules, and indeed this whole theory having been little more than rules developed, we cannot but remark upon a common opinion, which seems to have arisen either from prejudice or mistake.

"Do not rules," say they, "cramp
"genius ? Do they not abridge it of certain privileges ?"

'Tis answered, If the obeying of rules were to induce a tyranny like this ; to defend them would be absurd, and against the liberty of genius. But the truth is, rules, supposing them good, like good government, take away no privileges. They

They do no more, than save genius from error, by shewing it, that a right to err is no privilege at all.

'Tis surely no privilege to violate in grammar the rules of syntax; in poetry, those of metre; in music, those of harmony; in logic, those of syllogism; in painting, those of perspective; in dramatic poetry, those of probable imitation.

Harris.

§ 201. *The flattering Doctrine that Genius will suffice, fallacious.*

It must be confessed, 'tis a flattering doctrine, to tell a young beginner, that he has nothing more to do than to trust his own genius, and to condemn all rules, as the tyranny of pedants. The painful toils of accuracy by this expedient are eluded, for geniuses, like Milton's Harps, (Par. Lost, Book III. v. 365, 366.) are supposed to be ever tuned.

But the misfortune is, that genius is something rare; nor can he who possesses it, even then, by neglecting rules, produce what is accurate. Those, on the contrary, who, though they want genius, think rules worthy their attention, if they cannot become good authors, may still make tolerable critics; may be able to shew the difference between the creeping and the simple; the pert and the pleasing; the turgid and the sublime; in short, to sharpen, like the whetstone, that genius in others, which nature in her frugality has not given to themselves.

Ibid.

§ 202. *No Genius ever acted without Rules.*

Indeed I have never known, during a life of many years, and some small attention paid to letters, and literary men, that genius in any art had been ever cramped by rules. On the contrary, I have seen great geniuses, miserably err by transgressing them, and, like vigorous travellers, who lose their way, only wander the wider on account of their own strength.

And yet 'tis somewhat singular in literary compositions, and perhaps more so in poetry than elsewhere, that many things have been done in the best and purest taste, long before rules were established and systematized in form. This we are certain was true with respect to Homer, Sophocles, Euripides, and other Greeks. In modern times it appears as true of our admired Shakespeare; for who can believe

that Shakespeare studied rules, or was ever versed in critical systems? *Ibid.*

§ 203. *There never was a time when Rules did not exist.*

A specious objection then occurs. "If these great writers were so excellent before rules were established, or at least were known to them, what had they to direct their genius, when rules (to them at least) did not exist?"

To this question 'tis hoped the answer will not be deemed too hardy, should we assert, that there never was a time when rules did not exist; that they always made a part of that immutable truth, the natural object of every penetrating genius; and that if, at that early Greek period, systems of rules were not established, those great and sublime authors were a rule to themselves. They may be said indeed to have excelled, not by art, but by nature; yet by a nature which gave birth to the perfection of art.

The case is nearly the same with respect to our Shakespeare. There is hardly any thing we applaud, among his innumerable beauties, which will not be found strictly conformable to the rules of sound and ancient criticism.

That this is true with respect to his characters and his sentiment, is evident hence, that in explaining these rules, we have so often recurred to him for illustrations.

Besides quotations already alledged, we subjoin the following as to character.

When Falstaff and his suit are so ignominiously routed, and the scuffle is by Falstaff so humorously exaggerated, what can be more natural than such a narrative to such a character, distinguished for his humour, and withal for his want of veracity and courage?

The sagacity of common poets might not perhaps have suggested so good a narrative, but it certainly would have suggested something of the kind, and 'tis in this we view the essence of dramatic character, which is, when we conjecture what any one will do or say, from what he has done or said already.

If we pass from characters (that is to say manners) to sentiment, we have already given instances, and yet we shall still give another.

When Rosincrosse and Guildenstern wait upon Hamlet, he offers them a recorder or pipe,

pipe, and desires them to play—they reply, they cannot—He repeats his request—they answer, they have never learnt—He assures them nothing was so easy—they still decline.—’Tis then he tells them, with disdain, “There is much music in this ‘little organ; and yet you cannot make ‘it speak—Do you think I am easier to ‘be played on than a pipe?” Hamlet, Act III.

This I call an elegant sample of sentiment, taken under its comprehensive sense. But we stop not here—We consider it as a complete instance of Socratic reasoning, though ’tis probable the author knew nothing how Socrates used to argue.

To explain—Xenophon makes Socrates reason as follows with an ambitious youth, by name Euthydemus.

“’Tis strange (says he) that those who ‘desire to play upon the harp, or upon ‘the flute, or to ride the managed horse, ‘should not think themselves worth notice, ‘without having practised under the best ‘masters—while there are those who aspire to the governing of a state, and can ‘think themselves completely qualified, ‘though it be without preparation or ‘labour.” Xenoph. Mem. IV. c. 2. f. 6.

Aristotle’s Illustration is similar, in his reasoning—against men chosen by lot for magistrates. “’Tis (says he) as if wrestlers were to be appointed by lot, and not those that are able to wrestle; or, as if from among sailors we were to chuse a pilot by lot, and that the man so elected was to navigate, and not the man who knew the business.” Rhetor. L. II. c. 20. p. 94. Edit. Sylb.

Nothing can be more ingenious than this mode of reasoning. The premises are obvious and undeniable; the conclusion cogent and yet unexpected. It is a species of that argumentation, called in dialectic *ἑπαγωγή*, or induction.

Aristotle in his Rhetoric (as above quoted) calls such reasonings τὰ Σωκρατικά, the Socratics; in the beginning of his Poetics, he calls them the Σωκρατικοὶ λόγοι, the Socratic discourses; and Horace, in his Art of Poetry, calls them the Socraticæ chartæ. Harris.

§ 204. *The Connection between Rules and Genius.*

If truth be always the same, no wonder geniuses should coincide, and that too in philosophy, as well as in criticism.

We venture to add, returning to rules, that if there be any things in Shakespeare objectionable (and who is hardy enough to deny it?) the very objections, as well as the beauties, are to be tried by the same rules; as the same plummet alike shews both what is out of the perpendicular, and in it; the same rules alike prove both what is crooked and what is straight.

We cannot admit that geniuses, though prior to systems, were prior also to rules, because rules from the beginning existed in their own minds, and were a part of that immutable truth, which is eternal and every where. Aristotle, we know, did not form Homer, Sophocles, and Euripides; ’twas Homer, Sophocles, and Euripides, that formed Aristotle.

And this surely should teach us to pay attention to rules, in as much as they and genius are so reciprocally connected, that ’tis genius which discovers rules; and then rules which govern genius.

’Tis by this amicable concurrence, and by this alone, that every work of art justly merits admiration, and is rendered as highly perfect as, by human power, it can be made. *Ibid.*

§ 205. *We ought not to be content with knowing what we like, but what is really worth liking.*

’Tis not however improbable, that some intrepid spirit may demand again, What avail these subtleties?—Without so much trouble, I can be full enough pleased—I know what I like.—We answer, And so does the carrion-crow, that feeds upon a carcase. The difficulty lies not in knowing what we like, but in knowing how to like, and what is worth liking. Till these ends are obtained, we may admire Dursey before Milton; a smoking boor of Hemskirk, before an apostle of Raphael.

Now as to the knowing how to like, and then what is worth liking; the first of these, being the object of critical disquisition, has been attempted to be shewn through the course of these inquiries.

As to the second, what is worth our liking, this is best known by studying the best authors, beginning from the Greeks; then passing to the Latins; nor on any account excluding those who have excelled among the moderns.

And here, if, while we pursue some author of high rank, we perceive we don’t instantly relish him, let us not be disheartened—let us even feign a relish, till we find

find a relish come. A morsel perhaps pleases us—let us cherish it—Another morsel strikes us—let us cherish this also.—Let us thus proceed, and steadily persevere, till we find we can relish, not morsels, but wholes; and feel, that what began in fiction terminates in reality. The film being in this manner removed, we shall discover beauties which we never imagined; and condemn for puerilities, what we once foolishly admired.

One thing however in this process is indispensably required: we are on no account to expect that fine things should descend to us; our taste, if possible, must be made to ascend to them.

This is the labour, this the work; there is pleasure in the success, and praise even in the attempt.

This speculation applies not to literature only: it applies to music, to painting, and, as they are all congenial, to all the liberal arts. We should in each of them endeavour to investigate what is best, and there (if I may so express myself) fix our abode.

By only seeking and perusing what is truly excellent, and by contemplating always this and this alone, the mind insensibly becomes accustomed to it, and finds that in this alone it can acquiesce with content. It happens indeed here, as in a subject far more important, I mean in a moral and a virtuous conduct: if we chuse the best life, use will make it pleasant.

Harris.

§ 206. *Character of the ENGLISH, the ORIENTAL, the LATIN, and the GREEK Languages.*

We Britons in our time have been remarkable borrowers, as our multiform language may sufficiently shew. Our terms in polite literature prove, that this came from Greece; our terms in music and painting, that these came from Italy; our phrases in cookery and war, that we learnt these from the French; and our phrases in navigation, that we were taught by the Flemings and Low Dutch. These many and very different sources of our language may be the cause why it is so deficient in regularity and analogy. Yet we have this advantage to compensate the defect, that what we want in elegance, we gain in copiousness, in which last respect few languages will be found superior to our own.

Let us pass from ourselves to the nations of the East. The Eastern world, from the earliest days, has been at all

times the seat of enormous monarchy*: on its natives fair liberty never shed its genial influence. If at any time civil discord arose among them, (and arise there did innumerable) the contest was never about the form of their government (for this was an object of which the combatants had no conception); it was all from the poor motive of, who should be their master; whether a Cyrus or an Artaxerxes, a Mahomet or a Multapha.

Such was their condition; and what was the consequence?—Their ideas became consonant to their servile state, and their words became consonant to their servile ideas. The great distinction for ever in their fight, was that of tyrant and slave; the most unnatural one conceivable, and the most susceptible of pomp and empty exaggeration. Hence they talked of kings as gods; and of themselves as the meanest and most abject reptiles. Nothing was either great or little in moderation, but every sentiment was heightened by incredible hyperbole. Thus, though they sometimes ascended into the great and magnificent †, they as frequently degenerated into the tumid and bombast. The Greeks too of Asia became infected by their neighbours, who were often, at times, not only their neighbours, but their masters; and hence that luxuriance of the Asiatic style, unknown to the chaste eloquence and purity of Athens. But of the Greeks we forbear to speak now, as we shall speak of them more fully, when we have first considered the nature or genius of the Romans.

And what sort of people may we pronounce the Romans?—A nation engaged in wars and commotions, some foreign, some domestic, which for seven hundred years wholly engrossed their thoughts. Hence therefore their language became, like their ideas, copious in all terms expressive of things political, and well adapted to the purposes both of history and popular eloquence.—But what was their philosophy?—As a nation it was none, if we may credit their ablest writers. And hence

* For the Barbarians, by being more slavish in their manners than the Greeks, and those of Asia than those of Europe, submit to despotic government without murmuring or discontent, Arist. Polit. III. 4.

† The truest sublime of the East may be found in the scriptures, of which perhaps the principal cause is the intrinsic greatness of the subject there treated; the creation of the universe, the dispensations of divine Providence, &c.

the unfitness of their language to this subject; a defect which even Cicero is compelled to confess, and more fully makes appear, when he writes philosophy himself, from the number of terms which he is obliged to invent*. Virgil seems to have judged the most truly of his countrymen, when, admitting their inferiority in the

more elegant arts, he concludes at last with his usual majesty:

Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento,
(Hæ tibi erunt artes) pacisque imponere morem,
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbis.

From considering the Romans, let us pass to the Greeks. The Grecian commonwealths, while they maintained their

* See Cic. de Fin. I. C. 1, 2, 3. III. C. 1, 2, 4, &c. but in particular Tusc. Disp. I. 3, where he says, "Philosophia jacuit usque ad hanc ætatem, nec ullum habuit lumen literarum Latinarum: quæ illustranda & excitanda nobis est; ut si," &c. See also Tusc. Disp. IV. 3. and Acad. I. 2. where it appears, that until Cicero applied himself to the writing of philosophy, the Romans had nothing of the kind in their language, except some mean performances of Amasanius the Epicurean, and others of the same sect. How far the Romans were indebted to Cicero for philosophy, and with what industry, as well as eloquence, he cultivated the subject, may be seen not only from the titles of those works that are now lost, but much more from the many noble ones still fortunately preserved.

The Epicurean poet Lucretius, who flourished nearly at the same time, seems by his silence to have overlooked the Latin writers of his own sect; deriving all his philosophy, as well as Cicero, from Grecian sources; and, like him, acknowledging the difficulty of writing philosophy in Latin, both from the poverty of the tongue, and from the novelty of the subject.

Nec me animi fallit, Græcorum obscura reperta
Difficile illustrare Latinis versibus esse,
(Multa novis rebus præsertim quum sit agendum.)

Propter egestatem linguæ et rerum novitatem:
Sed tua me virtus tamen, et sperata voluptas
Amicitia quemvis perferre laborum
Suadet— Lucr. l. 237.

In the same age, Varro, among his numerous works, wrote some in the way of philosophy; as did the patriot Brutus a treatise concerning virtue, much applauded by Cicero; but these works are now lost.

Soon after the writers above mentioned, came Horace, some of whose satires and epistles may be justly ranked among the most valuable pieces of Latin philosophy, whether we consider the purity of their style, or the great address with which they treat the subject.

After Horace, though with as long an interval as from the days of Augustus to those of Nero, came the satirist Persius, the friend and disciple of the stoic Cornutus; to whose precepts, as he did honour by his virtuous life, so his works, though small, shew an early proficiency in the science of morals. Of him it may be said, that he is almost the single difficult writer among the Latin classics, whose meaning has sufficient merit to make it worth while to labour through his obscurities.

In the same degenerate and tyrannic period lived also Seneca; whose character, both as a man and a writer, is discussed with great accuracy by the noble author of the Characteristics, to whom we refer.

Under a milder dominion, that of Hadrian and the Antonines, lived Aulus Gellius, or (as some call him) Agellius, an entertaining writer in the miscellaneous way, well skilled in criticism and antiquity; who, though he can hardly be entitled to the name of a philosopher, yet deserves not to pass unmentioned here, from the curious fragments of philosophy interperfed in his works.

With Aulus Gellius we range Macrobius, not because a contemporary (for he is supposed to have lived under Honorius and Theodosius) but from his near resemblance, in the character of a writer. His works, like the other's, are miscellaneous; filled with mythology and ancient literature, some philosophy being intermixed. His Commentary upon the Somnium Scipionis of Cicero may be considered as wholly of the philosophical kind.

In the same age with Aulus Gellius, flourished Apuleius of Madura in Africa, a Platonic writer, whose matter in general far exceeds his perplexed and affected style, too conformable to the false rhetoric of the age when he lived.

Of the same country, but of a later age, and a harsher style, was Martianus Capella, if indeed he deserve not the name rather of a philologist, than of a philosopher.

After Capella we may rank Chalcidius the Platonic, though both his age, and country, and religion, are doubtful. His manner of writing is rather more agreeable than that of the two preceding, nor does he appear to be their inferior in the knowledge of philosophy, his work being a laudable commentary upon the Timæus of Plato.

The last Latin philosopher was Boethius, who was descended from some of the noblest of the Roman families, and was consul in the beginning of the sixth century. He wrote many philosophical works, the greater part in the logical way. But his ethic piece, "On the Consolation of Philosophy," and which is partly prose and partly verse, deserves great encomiums both for the matter and for the style; in which last he approaches the purity of a far better age than his own, and is in all respects preferable to those crabbed Africans already mentioned. By command of Theodoric, king of the Goths, it was the hard fate of this worthy man to suffer death; with whom the Latin tongue, and the last remains of Roman dignity, may be said to have sunk in the western world.

There were other Romans, who left philosophical writings; such as Musonius Rufus, and the two emperors, Marcus Antoninus and Julian; but as these preferred the use of the Greek tongue to their own, they can hardly be considered among the number of Latin writers.

And so much (by way of sketch) for the Latin authors of philosophy; a small number for so vast an empire, if we consider them as all the product of near six successive centuries.

liberty,

liberty, were the most heroic confederacy that ever existed. They were the politest, the bravest, and the wisest of men. In the short space of little more than a century they became such statesmen, warriors, orators, historians, physicians, poets, critics, painters, sculptors, architects, and (last of all) philosophers, that one can hardly help considering that golden period, as a providential event in honour of human nature, to shew to what perfection the species might ascend*.

Now the language of these Greeks was truly like themselves; it was conformable to their transcendent and universal genius. Where matter so abounded, words followed of course, and those exquisite in every kind, as the ideas for which they stood. And hence it followed, there was not a subject to be found which could not with propriety be expressed in Greek.

Here were words and numbers for the

humour of an Aristophanes; for the native elegance of a Philemon or Menander; for the amorous strains of a Mimnermus or Sappho; for the rural lays of a Theocritus or Bion; and for the sublime conceptions of a Sophocles or Homer. The same in prose. Here Isocrates was enabled to display his art, in all the accuracy of periods and the nice counterpoise of diction. Here Demosthenes found materials for that nervous composition, that manly force of unaffected eloquence, which rushed like a torrent, too impetuous to be withstood.

Who were more different in exhibiting their philosophy, than Xenophon, Plato, and his disciple Aristotle? Different, I say, in their character of composition; for, as to their philosophy itself, it was in reality the same. Aristotle, strict, methodic, and orderly; subtle in thought; sparing in ornament; with little address to the passions or imagination; but exhibiting the

* If we except Homer, Hesiod, and the Lyric poets, we hear of few Grecian writers before the expedition of Xerxes. After that monarch had been defeated, and the dread of the Persian power was at an end, the effulgence of Grecian genius (if I may use the expression) broke forth, and shone till the time of Alexander the Macedonian, after whom it disappeared, and never rose again. This is that golden period spoken of above. I do not mean that Greece had not many writers of great merit subsequent to that period, and especially of the philosophic kind; but the great, the striking, the sublime (call it as you please) attained at that time to a height, to which it never could ascend in any after age.

The same kind of fortune befel the people of Rome. When the Punic wars were ended, and Carthage, their dreaded rival, was no more, then, as Horace informs us, they began to cultivate the politer arts. It was soon after their great orators, and historians, and poets arose, and Rome, like Greece, had her golden period, which lasted to the death of Octavius Cæsar.

I call these two periods, from the two greatest geniuses that flourished in each, one the Socratic period, the other the Ciceronian.

There are still farther analogies subsisting between them. Neither period commenced, as long as solicitude for the common welfare engaged men's attentions, and such wars impended as threatened their destruction by foreigners and barbarians. But when once these fears were over, a general security soon ensued, and instead of attending to the arts of defence and self-preservation, they began to cultivate those of elegance and pleasure. Now, as these naturally produced a kind of wanton insolence, not unlike the vicious temper of high-fed animals; so by this the bands of union were insensibly dissolved. Hence then, among the Greeks, that fatal Peloponnesian war, which, together with other wars, its immediate consequence, broke the confede-

racy of their commonwealths; wasted their strength; made them jealous of each other; and thus paved a way for the contemptible kingdom of Macedon to enslave them all, and ascend in a few years to universal monarchy.

A like luxuriance of prosperity sowed discord among the Romans; raised those unhappy contests between the senate and the Gracchi; between Sylla and Marius; between Pompey and Cæsar; till at length, after the last struggle for liberty by those brave patriots, Brutus and Cassius at Philippi, and the subsequent defeat of Antony at Actium, the Romans became subject to the dominion of a fellow citizen.

It must indeed be confessed, that after Alexander and Octavius had established their monarchies, there were many bright geniuses, who were eminent under their government. Aristotle maintained a friendship and epistolary correspondence with Alexander. In the time of the same monarch lived Theophrastus, and the cynic Diogenes. Then also Demosthenes and Æschines spoke their two celebrated orations. So likewise, in the time of Octavius, Virgil wrote his *Æneid*, and with Horace, Varius, and many other fine writers, partook of his protection and royal munificence. But then it must be remembered, that these men were bred and educated in the principles of a free government. It was hence they derived that high and manly spirit which made them the admiration of after-ages. The successors and forms of government left by Alexander and Octavius, soon stopt the growth of any thing farther in the kind. So true is that noble saying of Longinus—*ὅτι καὶ τὸ γὰρ ἔκαστος τὰ ἐπιμαστὰ τῶν μεγαλοφρονῶν ἐξαιρέσεια, ὡς ἰσχυροῦς ὁ ἀπὸ διωκτοῦ τοῦ πεδίου τοῦ πρὸς ἀλλήλους, ἔρως, ὃ τῶν ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ ἐκτρέφεται.* "It is liberty that is formed to nurse the sentiments of great geniuses; to inspire them with hope; to push forward the propensity of contest one with another, and the generous emulation of being the first in rank." *De Subl. Sect. 44.*

whole

whole with such a pregnant brevity, that in every sentence we seem to read a page. How exquisitely is this all performed in Greek! Let those, who imagine it may be done as well in another language, satisfy themselves, either by attempting to translate him, or by perusing his translations already made by men of learning. On the contrary, when we read either Xenophon or Plato, nothing of this method and strict order appears. The formal and didactic is wholly dropt. Whatever they may teach, it is without professing to be teachers; a train of dialogue and truly polite address, in which, as in a mirror, we behold human life, adorned in all its colours of sentiment and manners.

And yet, though these differ in this manner from the Stagyrite, how different are they likewise in character from each other!—Plato, copious, figurative, and majestic; intermixing at times the facetious and satiric; enriching his works with tales and fables, and the mystic theology of ancient times. Xenophon, the pattern of perfect simplicity; every where smooth, harmonious, and pure; declining the figurative, the marvellous, and the mystic; ascending but rarely into the sublime; nor then so much trusting to the colours of style, as to the intrinsic dignity of the sentiment itself.

The language, in the mean time in which he and Plato wrote, appears to suit so accurately with the style of both, that when we read either of the two, we cannot help thinking, that it is he alone who has hit its character, and that it could not have appeared so elegant in any other manner.

And thus is the Greek tongue, from its propriety and universality, made for all that is great and all that is beautiful, in every subject and under every form of writing:

*Græcis ingenium, Græcis dedit ore rotundo
Musa loqui.*

It were to be wished, that those amongst us, who either write or read with a view to employ their liberal leisure (for as to such as do either from views more sordid, we leave them, like slaves, to their destined drudgery) it were to be wished, I say, that the liberal (if they have a relish for letters) would inspect the finished models of Grecian literature; that they would not waste those hours, which they cannot recal, upon the meaner productions of the French

and English press; upon that fungous growth of novels and of pamphlets, where it is to be feared, they rarely find any rational pleasure, and more rarely still any solid improvement.

To be competently skilled in ancient learning is by no means a work of such insuperable pains. The very progress itself is attended with delight, and resembles a journey through some pleasant country, where, every mile we advance, new charms arise. It is certainly as easy to be a scholar, as a gamester, or many other characters equally illiberal and low. The same application, the same quantity of habit, will fit us for one as completely as for the other. And as to those who tell us, with an air of seeming wisdom, that it is men, and not books, we must study to become knowing; this I have always remarked, from repeated experience, to be the common consolation and language of dunces. They shelter their ignorance under a few bright examples, whose transcendent abilities, without the common helps, have been sufficient of themselves to great and important ends. But alas!

Decipit exemplar vitæ imitabile—

In truth, each man's understanding, when ripened and mature, is a composite of natural capacity, and of superinduced habit. Hence the greatest men will be necessarily those who possess the best capacities, cultivated with the best habits. Hence also moderate capacities, when adorned with valuable science, will far transcend others the most acute by nature, when either neglected, or applied to low and base purposes. And thus, for the honour of culture and good learning, they are able to render a man, if he will take the pains, intrinsically more excellent than his natural superiors. *Harris.*

§ 207. *History of the Limits and Extent of the Middle Age.*

When the magnitude of the Roman empire grew enormous, and there were two imperial cities, Rome and Constantinople, then that happened which was natural; out of one empire it became two, distinguished by the different names of the Western, and the Eastern.

The Western empire soon sunk. So early as in the fifth century, Rome, once the mistress of nations, beheld herself at the feet of a Gothic sovereign. The Eastern empire lasted many centuries longer,

longer, and, though often impaired by external enemies, and weakened as often by internal factions, yet still it retained traces of its ancient splendor, resembling, in the language of Virgil, some fair but faded flower:

Cai neque fulgor adhuc, necdum, sua forma
recessit. VIRG.

At length, after various plunges and various escapes, it was totally annihilated in the fifteenth century by the victorious arms of Mahomet the Great.

The interval between the fall of these two empires (the Western or Latin in the fifth century, the Eastern or Grecian in the fifteenth) making a space of near a thousand years, constitutes what we call the Middle Age.

Dominion passed during this interval into the hands of rude, illiterate men: men who conquered more by multitude than by military skill; and who, having little or no taste either for sciences or arts, naturally despised those things from which they had reaped no advantage.

This was the age of Monks and Legends; of Leonine verses, (that is, of bad Latin put into rhyme;) of projects, to decide truth by ploughshares and battoons; of crusades, to conquer infidels, and extirpate heretics; of princes deposed, not as Croesus was by Cyrus, but one who had no armies, and who did not even wear a sword.

Different portions of this age have been distinguished by different descriptions: such as *Sæculum Monotheiticum*, *Sæculum Eiconoclasticum*, *Sæculum Obscurum*, *Sæculum Ferreum*, *Sæculum Hildibrandinum*, &c.; strange names it must be confessed, some more obvious, others less so, yet none tending to furnish us with any high or promising ideas.

And yet we must acknowledge, for the honour of humanity and of its great and divine Author, who never forsakes it, that some sparks of intellect were at all times visible, through the whole of this dark and dreary period. It is here we must look for the taste and literature of the times.

The few who were enlightened, when arts and sciences were thus obscured, may be said to have happily maintained the continuity of knowledge; to have been (if I may use the expression) like the twilight of a summer's night; that auspicious gleam between the setting and the rising sun, which, though it cannot retain the lustre

of the day, helps at least to save us from the totality of darkness. Harris.

§ 208. *An Account of the Destruction of the Alexandrian Library.*

"When Alexandria was taken by the Mahometans, Amrus, their commander, found there Philoponus, whose conversation highly pleased him, as Amrus was a lover of letters, and Philoponus a learned man. On a certain day Philoponus said to him: 'You have visited all the repositories or public warehouses in Alexandria, and you have sealed up things of every sort that are found there. As to those things that may be useful to you, I presume to say nothing; but as to things of no service to you, some of them perhaps may be more suitable to me.' Amrus said to him: 'And what is it you want?' 'The philosophical books (replied he) preserved in the royal libraries.' 'This (said Amrus) is a request upon which I cannot decide. You desire a thing where I can issue no orders till I have leave from Omar, the commander of the faithful.'—Letters were accordingly written to Omar, informing him of what Philoponus had said; and an answer was returned by Omar, to the following purport: 'As to the books of which you have made mention, if there be contained in them what accords with the book of God (meaning the Alcoran) there is without them, in the book of God, all that is sufficient. But if there be any thing in them repugnant to that book, we in no respect want them. Order them therefore to be all destroyed.' Amrus, upon this ordered them to be dispersed through the baths of Alexandria, and to be there burnt in making the baths warm. After this manner, in the space of six months, they were all consumed."

The historian, having related the story, adds from his own feelings, "Hear what was done, and wonder!"

Thus ended this noble library; and thus began, if it did not begin sooner, the age of barbarity and ignorance. *Ibid.*

§ 209. *A Short Historical Account of ATHENS, from the Time of her PERSIAN Triumphs to that of her becoming subject to the Turks.—Sketch, during this long Interval, of her Political and Literary State; of her Philosophers; of her Gymnasia; of her good and bad Fortunes,*

tune, &c. &c.—Manners of the present Inhabitants.—Olives and Honey.

When the Athenians had delivered themselves from the tyranny of Pisistratus, and after this had defeated the vast efforts of the Persians, and that against two successive invaders, Darius and Xerxes, they may be considered as at the summit of their national glory. For more than half a century afterwards they maintained, without controul, the sovereignty of Greece*.

As their taste was naturally good, arts of every kind soon rose among them, and flourished. Valour had given them reputation; reputation gave them an ascendant; and that ascendant produced a security, which left their minds at ease, and gave them leisure to cultivate every thing liberal or elegant.

It was then that Pericles adorned the city with temples, theatres, and other beautiful public buildings. Phidias, the great sculptor, was employed as his architect; who, when he had erected edifices, adorned them himself, and added statues and basso-relievos, the admiration of every beholder. It was then that Polygnotus and Myro painted; that Sophocles and Euripides wrote; and, not long after, that they saw the divine Socrates.

Human affairs are by nature prone to change; and states, as well as individuals, are born to decay. Jealousy and ambition insensibly fomented wars: and success in these wars, as in others, was often various. The military strength of the Athenians was first impaired by the Lacedemonians; after that, it was again humiliated, under Epaminondas, by the Thebans; and, last of all, it was wholly crushed by the Macedonian Philip.

But though their political sovereignty was lost; yet, happily for mankind, their love of literature and arts did not sink along with it.

Just at the close of their golden days of empire, flourished Xenophon and Plato, the disciples of Socrates; and from Plato descended that race of philosophers called the Old Academy.

Aristotle, who was Plato's disciple, may be said not to have invented a new philosophy, but rather to have tempered the sublime and rapturous mysteries of his mas-

ter with method, order, and a stricter mode of reasoning.

Zeno, who was himself also educated in the principles of Platonism, only differed from Plato in the comparative estimate of things, allowing nothing to be intrinsically good but virtue, nothing intrinsically bad but vice, and considering all other things to be in themselves indifferent.

He too, and Aristotle, accurately cultivated logic, but in different ways: for Aristotle chiefly dwelt upon the simple syllogism; Zeno upon that which is derived out of it, the compound or hypothetic. Both too, as well as other philosophers, cultivated rhetoric along with logic; holding a knowledge in both to be requisite for those who think of addressing mankind with all the efficacy of persuasion. Zeno elegantly illustrated the force of these two powers by a simile, taken from the hand: the close power of logic he compared to the fist, or hand compréit; the diffuse power of logic, to the palm, or hand open.

I shall mention but two sects more, the New Academy, and the Epicurean.

The New Academy, so called from the Old Academy (the name given to the school of Plato) was founded by Arcefilas, and ably maintained by Carneades. From a mistaken imitation of the great parent of philosophy, Socrates, (particularly as he appears in the dialogues of Plato) because Socrates doubted some things, therefore Arcefilas and Carneades doubted all.

Epicurus drew from another source: Democritus had taught him atoms and a void. By the fortuitous concourse of atoms he fancied he could form a world, while by a feigned veneration he complimented away his gods, and totally denied their providential care, lest the trouble of it should impair their uninterrupted state of bliss. Virtue he recommended, though not for the sake of virtue, but pleasure; pleasure, according to him, being our chief and sovereign good. It must be confessed, however, that though his principles were erroneous, and even bad, never was a man more temperate and humane; never was a man more beloved by his friends, or more cordially attached to them in affectionate esteem.

We have already mentioned the alliance between philosophy and rhetoric. This cannot be thought wonderful, if rhetoric be the art by which men are persuaded, and if men cannot be persuaded without a knowledge of human nature: for what,

* For these historical facts, consult the ancient and modern authors of Grecian history.

but philosophy, can procure us this knowledge?

It was for this reason the ablest Greek philosophers not only taught (as we hinted before) but wrote also treatises upon rhetoric. They had a farther inducement, and that was the intrinsic beauty of their language, as it was then spoken among the learned and polite. They would have been ashamed to have delivered philosophy, as it has been too often delivered since, in compositions as clumsy as the common dialect of the mere vulgar.

The same love of elegance, which made them attend to their style, made them attend even to the places where their philosophy was taught.

Plato delivered his lectures in a place shaded with groves; on the banks of the river Ilissus; and which, as it once belonged to a person called Academus, was called after his name, the Academy. Aristotle chose another spot of a similar character, where there were trees and shade; a spot called the Lycæum. Zeno taught in a portico or colonnade, distinguished from other buildings of that sort (of which the Athenians had many) by the name of the Variegated Portico, the walls being decorated with various paintings of Polygnotus and Myro, two capital masters of that transcendent period. Epicurus addressed his hearers in those well-known gardens called, after his own name, the gardens of Epicurus.

Some of these places gave names to the doctrines which were taught there. Plato's philosophy took its name of Academic, from the Academy; that of Zeno was called the Stoic, from a Greek word signifying a portico.

The system indeed of Aristotle was not denominated from the place, but was called Peripatetic, from the manner in which he taught; from his walking about at the time when he disserted. The term Epicurean philosophy needs no explanation.

Open air, shade, water, and pleasant walks, seem above all things to favour that exercise the best suited to contemplation, I mean gentle walking, without inducing fatigue. The many agreeable walks in and about Oxford may teach my own countrymen the truth of this assertion, and best explain how Horace lived, while the student at Athens, employed (as he tells us)

— inter silvas Academique verum.

These places of public institution were

called among the Greeks by the name of Gymnasia, in which, whatever that word might have originally meant, were taught all those exercises, and all those arts, which tended to cultivate not only the body but the mind. As man was a being consisting of both, the Greeks could not consider that education as complete in which both were not regarded, and both properly formed. Hence their Gymnasia, with reference to this double end, were adorned with two statues, those of Mercury and of Hercules; the corporeal accomplishments being patronized (as they supposed) by the God of strength, the mental accomplishments, by the God of ingenuity.

It is to be feared, that many places, now called Academies, scarce deserve the name upon this extensive plan, if the professors teach no more than how to dance, fence, and ride upon horses.

It was for the cultivation of every liberal accomplishment that Athens was celebrated (as we have said) during many centuries, long after her political influence was lost, and at an end.

When Alexander the Great died, many tyrants, like many hydras, immediately sprung up. Athens then, though she still maintained the form of her ancient government, was perpetually checked and humiliated by their insolence. Antipater destroyed her orators; and she was sacked by Demetrius. At length she became subject to the all-powerful Romans, and found the cruel Sylla her severest enemy.

His face (which perhaps indicated his manners, was of a purple red, intermixed with white. This circumstance could not escape the witty Athenians: they described him in a verse, and ridiculously said,

Sylla's face is a mulberry, sprinkled with meal.

The devastations and carnage which he caused soon after, gave them too much reason to repent their sarcasm.

The civil war between Cæsar and Pompey soon followed, and their natural love of liberty made them side with Pompey. Here again they were unfortunate, for Cæsar conquered. But Cæsar did not treat them like Sylla. With that clemency, which made so amiable a part of his character, he dismissed them, by a fine allusion to their illustrious ancestors, saying, 'that he spared the living for the sake of the dead.'

Another storm followed soon after this, the wars of Brutus and Cassius with Augustus and Antony. Their partiality for liberty

berty did not here forsake them; they took part in the contest with the two patriot Romans, and erected their statues near their own ancient deliverers, Harmodius and Aristogiton, who had slain Hipparchus. But they were still unhappy, for their enemies triumphed.

They made their peace however with Augustus; and, having met afterwards with different treatment under different emperors, sometimes favourable, sometimes harsh, and never more severe than under Vespasian, their oppressions were at length relieved by the virtuous Nerva and Trajan.

Mankind, during the interval which began from Nerva, and which extended to the death of that best of emperors, Marcus Antoninus, felt a respite from those evils which they had so severely felt before, and which they felt so severely revived under Commodus, and his wretched successors.

Athens, during the above golden period, enjoyed more than all others the general felicity, for the found in Adrian so generous a benefactor, that her citizens could hardly help esteeming him a second founder. He restored their old privileges, gave them new; repaired their ancient buildings, and added others of his own. Marcus Antoninus, although he did not do so much, still continued to shew them his benevolent attention.

If from this period we turn our eyes back, we shall find, for centuries before, that Athens was the place of education, not only for Greeks, but for Romans. 'Twas hither that Horace was sent by his father; 'twas here that Cicero put his son Marcus under Cratippus, one of the ablest philosophers then belonging to that city.

The sects of philosophers which we have already described, were still existing when St. Paul came thither. We cannot enough admire the superior eloquence of that apostle, in his manner of addressing so intelligent an audience. We cannot enough admire the sublimity of his exordium; the propriety of his mentioning an altar which he had found there; and his quotation from Aratus, one of their well-known poets. Acts xvii. 22.

Nor was Athens only celebrated for the residence of philosophers, and the institution of youth: Men of rank and fortune found pleasure in a retreat which contributed so much to their liberal enjoyment.

The friend and correspondent of Cicero, T. Pomponius, from his long attach-

ment to this city and country, had attained such a perfection in its arts and language, that he acquired to himself the additional name of Atticus. This great man may be said to have lived during times of the worst and cruellest factions. His youth was spent under Sylla and Marius; the middle of his life during all the sanguinary scenes that followed; and when he was old, he saw the proscriptions of Antony and Octavius. Yet though Cicero and a multitude more of the best men perished, he had the good fortune to survive every danger. Nor did he seek a safety for himself alone: his virtue so recommended him to the leaders of every side, that he was able to save not himself alone, but the lives and fortunes of many of his friends.

When we look to this amiable character, we may well suppose, that it was not merely for amusement that he chose to live at Athens; but rather that, by residing there, he might so far realize philosophy, as to employ it for the conduct of life, and not merely for ostentation.

Another person, during a better period (that I mean between Nerva and Marcus Antoninus) was equally celebrated for his affection to this city. By this person I mean Herodes Atticus, who acquired the last name from the same reasons for which it had formerly been given to Pomponius.

We have remarked already, that vicissitudes befall both men and cities, and changes too often happen from prosperous to adverse. Such was the state of Athens, under the successors of Alexander, and so on from Sylla down to the time of Augustus. It shared the same hard fate with the Roman empire in general, upon the accession of Commodus.

At length, after a certain period, the Barbarians of the North began to pour into the South. Rome was taken by Alaric, and Athens was besieged by the same. Yet here we are informed (at least we learn so from history) that it was miraculously saved by Minerva and Achilles. The goddess, it seems, and the hero, both of them appeared, compelling the invader to raise the siege.

Harris.

§ 210. *The Account given by SYNESIUS of ATHENS, and its subsequent History.*

Synesius, who lived in the fifth century, visited Athens, and gives, in his epistles, an account of his visit. Its lustre appears at that time to have been greatly diminished.

†

Among

Among other things he informs us, that the celebrated portico or colonnade, the Greek name of which gave name to the sect of Stoics, had, by an oppressive prodigal, been despoiled of its fine pictures; and that, on this devastation, it had been forsaken by those philosophers.

In the thirteenth century, when the Grecian empire was cruelly oppressed by the crusaders, and all things in confusion, Athens was besieged by one Segurus Leo, who was unable to take it; and, after that, by a Marquis of Montferrat, to whom it surrendered.

Its fortune after this was various; and it was sometimes under the Venetians, sometimes under the Catalonians, till Mahomet the Great made himself master of Constantinople. This fatal catastrophe (which happened near two thousand years after the time of Pisistratus) brought Athens, and with it all Greece, into the hands of the Turks, under whose despotic yoke it has continued ever since.

The city from this time has been occasionally visited, and descriptions of it published by different travellers. Wheeler was there along with Spon, in the time of our Charles the Second, and both of them have published curious and valuable narratives. Others, as well natives of this island as foreigners, have been there since, and some have given (as Monfr. Le Roy) specious publications of what we are to suppose they saw. None however have equalled the truth, the accuracy, and the elegance of Mr. Stuart, who, after having resided there between three and four years, has given such plans and elevations of the capital buildings now standing, together with learned comments to elucidate every part, that he seems, as far as was possible for the power of description, to have restored the city to its ancient splendour.

He has not only given us the greater outlines and their measures, but separate measures and drawings of the minuter decorations; so that a British artist may (if he please) follow Phidias, and build in Britain as Phidias did at Athens.

Spon, speaking of Attica, says, 'that the road near Athens was pleasing, and the very peasants polished.' Speaking of the Athenians in general, he says of them—"ils ont une politesse d'esprit naturelle, & beaucoup d'adresse dans toutes les affaires, qu'ils entreprennent."

Wheeler, who was Spon's fellow-traveller, says as follows, when he and his

company approached Athens: "We began now to think ourselves in a more civilized country than we had yet past: for not a shepherd that we met, but bid us welcome, and wished us a good journey." p. 335. Speaking of the Athenians, he adds, "This must with great truth be said of them, their bad fortune hath not been able to take from them what they have by nature, that is, much subtlety or wit." p. 347. And again. "The Athenians, notwithstanding the long possession that barbarism hath had of this place, seem to be much more polished, in point of manners and conversation, than any other in these parts; being civil, and of respectful behaviour to all, and highly complimentary in their discourse." p. 356.

Stuart says of the present Athenians, what Spon and Wheeler said of their forefathers:—"he found in them the same address, the same natural acuteness, though severely curbed by their despotic masters."

One custom I cannot omit. He tells me, that frequently at their convivial meetings, one of the company takes what they now call a lyre, though it is rather a species of guitar, and after a short prelude on the instrument, as if he were waiting for inspiration, accompanies his instrumental music with his voice, suddenly chanting some extempore verses, which seldom exceed two or three distichs; that he then delivers the lyre to his neighbour, who, after he has done the same, delivers it to another; and that so the lyre circulates, till it has passed round the table.

Nor can I forget his informing me, that, notwithstanding the various fortunes of Athens, as a city, Attica was still famous for Olives, and Mount Hymettus for Honey. Human institutions perish, but Nature is permanent.

Harris.

§ 211. *Anecdote of the Modern Greeks.*

I shall quit the Greeks, after I have related a short narrative; a narrative, so far curious, as it helps to prove, that even among the present Greeks, in the day of servitude, the remembrance of their ancient glory is not totally extinct.

When the late Mr. Anson (Lord Anson's brother) was upon his travels in the East, he hired a vessel to visit the isle of Tenedos. His pilot, an old Greek, as they were sailing along, said with some satisfaction, "There 'twas our fleet lay." Mr. Anson demanded, "What fleet?" "What fleet!" replied the old man (a little piqued at the

question) "why our Grecian fleet at the siege of Troy*." Harris.

described, 'twas natural they should paint the life and the manners which they saw.

Ibid.

§ 212. *On the different Modes of History.*

The modes indeed of history appear to be different. There is a mode which we may call historical declamation; a mode, where the author, dwelling little upon facts, indulges himself in various and copious reflections.

Whatever good (if any) may be derived from this method, it is not likely to give us much knowledge of facts.

Another mode is, that which I call general or rather public history; a mode abundant in facts, where treaties and alliances, battles and sieges, marches and retreats, are accurately detailed; together with dates, descriptions, tables, plans, and all the collateral helps both of chronology and geography.

In this, no doubt, there is utility: yet the sameness of the events resembles not a little the sameness of human bodies. One head, two shoulders, two legs, &c. seem equally to characterise an European and an African; a native of old Rome, and a native of modern.

A third species of history still behind, is that which gives a sample of sentiments and manners.

If the account of these last be faithful, it cannot fail being instructive, since we view through these the interior of human nature. 'Tis by these we perceive what sort of animal man is: so that while not only Europeans are distinguished from Asiatics, but English from French, French from Italians, and (what is still more) every individual from his neighbour; we view at the same time one nature, which is common to them all.

Horace informs us that a drama, where the sentiments and manners are well preserved, will please the audience more than a pompous fable, where they are wanting. Perhaps what is true in dramatic composition, is no less true in historical.

Plutarch, among the Greek historians, appears in a peculiar manner to have merited this praise.

Nor ought I to omit (as I shall soon refer to them) some of our best Monkish historians, though prone upon occasion to degenerate into the incredible. As they often lived during the times which they

§ 213. *Concerning Natural Beauty; its Idea the same in all Times.*—THESSALIAN TEMPLE.—Taste of VIRGIL, and HORACE—of MILTON, in describing Paradise—exhibited of late Years first in *Pictures*—thence transferred to ENGLISH Gardens—not wanting to the enlightened Few of the middle Age—proved in LELAND, PETRARCH, and SANNAZARIUS.—Comparison between the Younger CYRUS, and PHILIP LE BEL of FRANCE.

Let us pass for a moment from the elegant works of Art, to the more elegant works of Nature. The two subjects are so nearly allied, that the same taste usually relishes them both.

Now there is nothing more certain, than that the face of inanimate nature has been at all times captivating. The vulgar, indeed, look no farther than to scenes of culture, because all their views merely terminate in utility. They only remark, that 'tis fine barley; that 'tis rich clover; as an ox or an ass, if they could speak, would inform us. But the liberal have nobler views; and though they give to culture its due praise, they can be delighted with natural beauties, where culture was never known.

Ages ago they have celebrated with enthusiastic rapture, "a deep retired vale, " with a river rushing through it; a vale " having its sides formed by two immense " and opposite mountains, and those sides " diversified by woods, precipices, rocks, " and romantic caverns." Such was the scene produced by the river Peneus, as it ran between the mountains Olympus and Ossa, in that well-known vale the Thessalian Tempé.

Virgil and Horace, the first for taste among the Romans, appear to have been enamoured with the beauties of this character. Horace prayed for a villa, where there was a garden, a rivulet, and above these a little grove:

Hortus ubi et tectis vicinus jugis aque fons,
Et paulum sylvæ super his foret.

Sat. VI. 2.

Virgil wished to enjoy rivers and woods, and to be hid under immense shade in the cool valleys of mount Hæmus—

—O! qui me gelidis in vallibus Hæmi
Sistat, et ingenti ramorum protegat unibrâ?

Georg. II. 486.

The

* This story was told the author, Mr. Harris, by Mr. Anson himself.

The great elements of this species of beauty, according to these principles, were water, wood, and uneven ground; to which may be added a fourth, that is to say, lawn. 'Tis the happy mixture of these four that produces every scene of natural beauty, as 'tis a more mysterious mixture of other elements (perhaps as simple, and not more in number) that produces a world or universe.

Virgil and Horace having been quoted, we may quote, with equal truth, our great countryman, Milton. Speaking of the flowers of Paradise, he calls them flowers,

— which not nice Art
In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon
Pours forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain.
P. L. IV. 245.

Soon after this he subjoins—

— this was the place,
A happy rural seat, of various view.

He explains this variety, by recounting the lawns, the flocks, the hillocks, the valleys, the grots, the waterfalls, the lakes, &c. &c. And in another book, describing the approach of Raphael, he informs us, that this divine messenger pass

— through groves of myrrh,
And flow'ring odours, cassia, nard, and balm,
A wilderness of sweets; for nature here
Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will
Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
Wild above rule or art, enormous bliss!
IV. 292.

The painters in the preceding century seem to have felt the power of these elements, and to have transferred them into their landscapes with such amazing force, that they appear not so much to have followed as to have emulated nature. Claude de Lorraine, the Poussins, Salvator Rosa, and a few more, may be called superior artists in this exquisite taste.

Our gardens in the mean time were tasteless and insipid. Those who made them, thought the farther they wandered from nature, the nearer they approached the sublime. Unfortunately, where they travelled, no sublime was to be found; and the farther they went, the farther they left it behind.

But perfection, alas! was not the work of a day. Many prejudices were to be removed; many gradual ascents to be made; ascents from bad to good, and from good to better, before the delicious amenities of a Claude or a Poussin could be rivalled in a Stourhead, a Hagley, or a Stow; or the tremendous charms of a Salvator Rosa

be equalled in the scenes of a Piercefield, or a Mount Edgcomb.

Not however to forget the subject of our inquiry.—Though it was not before the present century, that we established a chaster taste; though our neighbours at this instant are but learning it from us; and though to the vulgar every where it is totally incomprehensible (be they vulgar, in rank, or vulgar in capacity): yet, even in the darkest periods we have been treating of, periods when taste is often thought to have been lost, we shall still discover an enlightened few, who were by no means insensible to the power of these beauties.

How warmly does Leland describe Guy's Cliff; Sannazarius, his villa of Mergillina; and Petrarch, his favourite Vaucluse!

Take Guy's Cliff from Leland in his own old English, mixt with Latin—"It is a place meet for the Muses; there is sylence; a praty wood; antra in vivo saxo (grottos in the living rock); the river rolling over the stones with a praty noyse." His Latin is more elegant—"Nemusculum ibidem opacum, fontes liquidi et gemmei, prata, florida, antra muscosa, rivi levis et per saxa decursus; nec non solitudo et quies Musis amicissima."—Vol. iv. p. 66.

Mergillina, the villa of Sannazarius, near Naples, is thus sketched in different parts of his poems:

Exciso in scopulo, fluctus unde aurea canos
Despicens, celsio se culmine Mergilline
Attollit, nautique procul venientibus offert.
Sannaz. De partu Virgin. I. 25.

Rupis O! sacre, pelagique custos,
Villa, Nympharum cultos et propinquos
Doridos—
Tu mihi solos nemorum recessus
Das, et hærentes per opaca lauros
Saxa: Tu fontes, Aganippedumque
Antra recludis.

Ejusd. Epigr. I. 2.

— quæque in primis mihi grata ministrat
Otia, Musarumque cava per saxa latebras,
Mergillina; novos fundunt ubi citra flores.
Citria, Medorum sacros referentia lucos.
Ejusd. De partu Virgin. III. sub. fin.

De Fonte Mergillino.

Est mihi rivo vitrens perenni
Fons, arenosum prope litus, unde
Sæpe descendens sibi nauta rores
Haurit amicos, &c.

Ejusd. Epigr. II. 36.

It would be difficult to translate these elegant morsels.—It is sufficient to express what

what they mean, collectively—"that the villa of Mergillina had solitary woods; had groves of laurel and citron; had grottos in the rock, with rivulets and springs; and that from its lofty situation it looked down upon the sea, and commanded an extensive prospect."

It is no wonder that such a villa should enamour such an owner. So strong was his affection for it, that when, during the subsequent wars in Italy, it was demolished by the imperial troops, this unfortunate event was supposed to have hastened his end.

Vaucluse (Vallis Clausa) the favourite retreat of Petrarch, was a romantic scene, not far from Avignon.

"It is a valley, having on each hand, as you enter, immense cliffs, but closed up at one of its ends by a semicircular ridge of them; from which incident it derives its name. One of the most stupendous of these cliffs stands in the front of the semicircle, and has at its foot an opening into an immense cavern. Within the most retired and gloomy part of this cavern is a large oval basin, the production of nature, filled with pellucid and unfathomable water; and from this reservoir issues a river of respectable magnitude, dividing, as it runs, the meadows beneath, and winding through the precipices that impend from above."

This is an imperfect sketch of that spot, where Petrarch spent his time with so much delight, as to say that this alone was life to him, the rest but a state of punishment.

In the two preceding narratives I seem to see an anticipation of that taste for natural beauty, which now appears to flourish through Great Britain in such perfection. It is not to be doubted that the owner of Mergillina would have been charmed with Mount Edgecumbe; and the owner of Vaucluse have been delighted with Piercefield.

When we read in Xenophon, that the younger Cyrus had with his own hand planted trees for beauty, we are not surprised, though pleased with the story, as the age was polished, and Cyrus an accomplished prince. But when we read, that in the beginning of the 14th century, a king of France (Philip le Bel) should make it penal to cut down a tree, *qui a esté gardé pour sa beauté*, which had been preserved for its beauty; though we praise the law, we cannot help being surprised, that the prince should at such a period have been so far enlightened.

Harris.

§ 214. *Superior Literature and Knowledge both of the Greek and Latin Clergy, whence—Barbarity and Ignorance of the Laity, whence—Samples of Lay Manners, in a Story from Anna Comnena's History. —Church Authority ingeniously employed to check Barbarity—the same Authority employed for other good Purposes—to save the poor Jews—to stop Trials by Battle.—More suggested concerning Lay Manners.—Ferocity of the Northern Laymen, whence—different Causes assigned.—Inventions during the dark Ages great, though the Inventors often unknown.—Inference arising from these Inventions.*

Before I quit the Latins, I shall subjoin two or three observations on the Europeans in general.

The superior characters for literature here enumerated, whether in the Western or Eastern Christendom (for it is of Christendom only we are now speaking) were by far the greatest part of them ecclesiastics.

In this number we have selected from among the Greeks the patriarch of Constantinople, Photius; Michael Psellus; Eustathius and Eustratius, both of episcopal dignity; Planudes; Cardinal Bessarion—from among the Latins, venerable Bede; Gerbertus, afterwards Pope Silvester the Second; Ingulphus, Abbot of Croyland; Hildebert, Archbishop of Tours; Peter Abelard; John of Salisbury, Bishop of Chartres; Roger Bacon; Francis Petrarch; many Monkish historians; Aeneas Sylvius, afterwards Pope Pius the Second, &c.

Something has been already said concerning each of these, and other ecclesiastics. At present we shall only remark, that it was necessary, from their very profession, that they should read and write; accomplishments at that time usually confined to themselves.

Those of the Western Church were obliged to acquire some knowledge of Latin; and for Greek, to those of the Eastern Church it was still (with a few corruptions) their native language.

If we add to these preparations their mode of life, which, being attended mostly with a decent competence, gave them immense leisure; it was not wonderful that, among such a multitude, the more meritorious should emerge and soar, by dint of genius, above the common herd. Similar effects proceed from similar causes. The learning of Egypt was possessed by their priests;

priests; who were likewise left from their institution to a life of leisure.

From the laity, on the other side, who, from their mean education, wanted all these requisites, they were in fact no better than what Dryden calls them, a tribe of Issachar; a race, from their cradle bred in barbarity and ignorance.

A sample of these illustrious laymen may be found in Anna Comnena's history of her father Alexius, who was Grecian emperor in the eleventh century, when the first Crusade arrived at Constantinople. So promiscuous a rout of rude adventurers could not fail of giving umbrage to the Byzantine court, which was stately and ceremonious, and conscious withal of its internal debility.

After some altercation, the court permitted them to pass into Asia through the Imperial territories, upon their leaders taking an oath of fealty to the emperor.

What happened at the performance of this ceremonial, is thus related by the fair historian above-mentioned.

"All the commanders being assembled, and Godfrey of Bulloign himself among the rest, as soon as the oath was finished, one of the counts had the audaciousness to seat himself beside the emperor upon his throne. Earl Baldwin, one of their own people, approaching, took the count by the hand, made him rise from the throne, and rebuked him for his insolence.

"The count rose, but made no reply, except it was in his own unknown jargon, to mutter abuse upon the emperor.

"When all things were dispatched, the emperor sent for this man, and demanded who he was, whence he came, and of what lineage?—His answer was as follows—I am a genuine Frank, and in the number of their nobility. One thing I know, which is, that in a certain part of the country I came from, and in a place where three ways meet, there stands an ancient church, where every one who has a desire to engage in single combat, having put himself into fighting order, comes, and there implores the assistance of the Deity, and then waits in expectation of some one that will dare attack him. On this spot I myself waited a long time, expecting and seeking some one that would arrive and fight me. But the man, that would dare this, was nowhere to be found."

"The emperor, having heard this strange narrative, replied pleasantly—
"If at the time when you fought war, you could not find it, a season is now coming in which you will find wars enough. I therefore give you this advice; not to place yourself either in the rear of the army, or in the front, but to keep among those who support the centre; for I have long had knowledge of the Turkish method in their wars."

This was one of those counts, or barons, the petty tyrants of Western Europe; men, who, when they were not engaged in general wars (such as the ravaging of a neighbouring kingdom, the massacring of infidels, heretics, &c.) had no other method of filling up their leisure, than, through help of their vassals, by waging war upon one another.

And here the humanity and wisdom of the church cannot enough be admired, when by her authority (which was then mighty) she endeavoured to shorten that scene of bloodshed, which she could not totally prohibit. The truce of God (a name given it purposely to render the measure more solemn) enjoined these ferocious beings, under the terrors of excommunication, not to fight from Wednesday evening to Monday morning, out of reverence to the mysteries accomplished on the other four days; the ascension on Thursday; the crucifixion on Friday; the descent to hell on Saturday; and the resurrection on Sunday.

I hope a farther observation will be pardoned, when I add, that the same humanity prevailed during the fourteenth century, and that the terrors of church power were then held forth with an intent equally laudable. A dreadful plague at that period desolated all Europe. The Germans, with no better reason than their own senseless superstition, imputed this calamity to the Jews, who then lived among them in great opulence and splendour. Many thousands of these unhappy people were inhumanly massacred, till the pope benevolently interfered, and prohibited, by the severest bulls, so mad and sanguinary a proceeding.

I could not omit two such salutary exertions of church power, as they both occur within the period of this inquiry. I might add a third, I mean the opposing and endeavouring to check that absurdest of all practices, the trial by battle, which Spelman

man expressly tells us, that the church in all ages condemned.

It must be confessed, that the fact just related, concerning the unmannered count, at the court of Constantinople, is rather against the order of Chronology, for it happened during the first crusades. It serves, however, to shew the manners of the Latin, or Western laity, in the beginning of that holy war. They did not in a succession of years, grow better, but worse.

It was a century after, that another crusade, in their march against infidels, sacked this very city; deposed the then emperor; and committed devastations, which no one would have committed but the most ignorant, as well as cruel barbarians.

But a question here occurs, easier to propose than to answer—"To what are we to attribute this character of ferocity, which seems to have then prevailed through the laity of Europe?"

Shall we say it was climate, and the nature of the country?—These, we must confess, have, in some instances, great influence.

The Indians, seen a few years since by Mr. Byron in the southern parts of South America, were brutal and savage to an enormous excess. One of them, for a trivial offence, murdered his own child (an infant) by dashing it against the rocks.—The Cyclopes, as described by Homer, were much of the same sort; each of them gave law to his own family, without regard for one another; and besides this, they were Atheists and Man-eaters.

May we not suppose, that a stormy sea, together with a frozen, barren, and inhospitable shore, might work on the imagination of these Indians, so as, by banishing all pleasing and benign ideas, to fill them with habitual gloom, and a propensity to be cruel?—Or might not the tremendous scenes of *Ætna* have had a like effect upon the Cyclopes, who lived amid smoke, thunderings, eruptions of fire, and earthquakes? If we may believe Fazelius, who wrote upon Sicily about two hundred years ago, the inhabitants near *Ætna* were in his time a similar race.

If therefore these limited regions had such an effect upon their natives, may not a similar effect be presumed from the vast regions of the North? may not its cold barren, uncomfortable climate, have made its numerous tribes equally rude and savage?

If this be not enough, we may add an-

other cause, I mean their profound ignorance. Nothing mends the mind more than culture; to which these emigrants had no desire, either from example or education, to lend a patient ear.

We may add a farther cause still, which is, that when they had acquired countries better than their own, they settled under the same military form through which they had conquered; and were in fact, when settled, a sort of army after a campaign, quartered upon the wretched remains of the ancient inhabitants, by whom they were attended under the different names of serfs, vassals, villains, &c.

It was not likely the ferocity of these conquerors should abate with regard to their vassals, whom, as strangers, they were more likely to suspect than to love.

It was not likely it should abate with regard to one another, when the neighbourhood of their castles, and the contiguity of their territories, must have given occasions (as we learn from history) for endless altercation. But this we leave to the learned in feudal tenures.

We shall add to the preceding remarks, one more, somewhat similar, and yet perfectly different; which is, that though the darkness in Western Europe, during the period here mentioned, was (in Scripture language) "a darkness that might be felt," yet it is surprising, that during a period so obscure, many admirable inventions found their way into the world; I mean such as clocks, telescopes, paper, gunpowder, the mariner's needle, printing, and a number here omitted.

It is surprising too, if we consider the importance of these arts, and their extensive utility, that it should be either unknown, or at least doubtful, by whom they were invented.

A lively fancy might almost imagine, that every art, as it was wanted, had suddenly started forth, addressing those that sought it, as *Eneas* did his companions—

—Coram, quem queritis, adsum. V & c.

And yet, fancy apart, of this we may be assured, that though the particular inventors may unfortunately be forgotten, the inventions themselves are clearly referable to man; to that subtle and active principle, human wit, or ingenuity.

Let me then submit the following query—

If the human mind be as truly of divine origin

origin as every other part of the universe; and if every other part of the universe bear testimony to its author; do not the inventions above-mentioned give us reason to assert, that God, in the operations of man, never leaves himself without a witness?

Harris.

§ 215. *Opinions on Past Ages and the Present.—Conclusion arising from the Discussion of these Opinions.—Conclusion of the Whole.*

And now having done with the Middle Age, we venture to say a word upon the Present.

Every past age has in its turn been a present age. This indeed is obvious, but this is not all; for every past age, when present, has been the object of abuse. Men have been represented by their contemporaries not only as bad, but degenerate; as inferior to their predecessors both in morals and bodily powers.

This is an opinion so generally received, that Virgil (in conformity to it) when he would express former times, calls them simply better, as if the term, *better*, implied former of course.

Hic genus antiquum Teuceri, pulcherrima proles,
Magnanimi heroes, nati melioribus annis.

Æn. vi. 648.

The same opinion is ascribed by Homer to old Nestor, when that venerable chief speaks of those heroes whom he had known in his youth. He relates some of their names. Perithous, Dryas, Cæneus, Theseus; and some also of their exploits; as how they had extirpated the savage Centaurs.—He then subjoins

ἡνέκας δ' ἂν ὄντι,
Τῶν αἰ τῶν ἑστέων αἰώνων, μαχόμενοι.

Il. A. 271.

— with these no one
Of earthly race, as men are now, could fight.

As these heroes were supposed to exceed in strength those of the Trojan war, so were the heroes of that period to exceed those that came after. Hence, from the time of the Trojan war to that of Homer, we learn that human strength was decreased by a complete half.

Thus the same Homer,

ὁ δὲ χερσίδιον λάβε χερσὶ
Τυδίδης, μέγα ἔργον, ὃ δ' αὖ διόγ' ἀνδρὶ φέρων,
Οἷον τῶν ἑστέων αἰώνων ὁ δὲ μὲν πᾶς πᾶλλας ἔσπετο.

Il. E. 302.

Then grasp'd Tydides in his hand a stone,
A bulk immense, which not two men could bear;
As men are now, but he alone with ease
Hud'd at —

Virgil goes farther, and tells us, that not twelve men of his time (and those too chosen ones) could even carry the stone which Turnus flung:

Vix illud lecti bis sex cervice subirent,
Qualia nunc hominum producit corpora tellus:
Ille manu raptum trepidus torquebat in hostem.

Æn. xii. 399.

Thus human strength, which in Homer's time was lessened to half, in Virgil's time was lessened to a twelfth. If strength and bulk (as commonly happens) be proportioned, what pygmies in stature must the men of Virgil's time have been, when their strength, as he informs us, was so far diminished! A man only eight times as strong (and not, according to the poet, twelve times) must at least have been between five and six feet higher than they were.

But we all know the privilege claimed by poets and painters.

It is in virtue of this privilege that Horace, when he mentions the moral degeneracies of his contemporaries, asserts that "their fathers were worse than their grandfathers; that they were worse than their fathers; and that their children would be "worse than they were;" describing no fewer, after the grandfather, than three successions of degeneracy:

Ætas parentum, pejor avis, tulit
Nos nequiores, mox daturos
Progeniem vitiosiorum.

Hor. Od. L. lii. 6.

We need only ask, were this a fact, what would the Romans have been, had they degenerated in this proportion for five or six generations more?

Yet Juvenal, subsequent to all this, supposes a similar progression; a progression in vice and infamy, which was not complete till his own times.

Then truly we learn, it could go no farther:

Nil erit ulterius, nostris quod moribus addat
Posteritas, &c.
Omne in præcipiti vitium stetit, &c.

Sat. i. 147, &c.

But even Juvenal, it seems, was mistaken, bad as we must allow his times to have been. Several centuries after, without regard to Juvenal, the same doctrine was inculcated with greater zeal than ever.

When the Western empire began to decline, and Europe and Africa were ravaged by barbarians, the calamities then happening (and formidable they were) naturally led

led men, who felt them, to esteem their own age the worst.

The enemies of Christianity (for Paganism was not then extinct) absurdly turned these calamities to the discredit of the Christian religion, and said, the times were so unhappy, because the gods were dishonoured, and the ancient worship neglected. Orosius, a Christian, did not deny the melancholy facts, but, to obviate an objection so dishonourable to the true religion, he endeavours to prove from historians, both sacred and profane, that calamities of every sort had existed in every age, as many and as great as those that existed then.

If Orosius has reasoned right (and his work is an elaborate one) it follows, that the lamentations made then, and made ever since, are no more than natural declamations incidental to man; declamations naturally arising (let him live at any period) from the superior efficacy of present events upon present sensations.

There is a praise belonging to the past, congenial with this censure; a praise formed from negatives, and best illustrated by examples.

Thus a declaimer might assert, (supposing he had a wish, by exalting the eleventh century, to debase the present) that "in the time of the Norman conqueror we had no routs, no ridottos, no Newmarkets, no candidates to bribe, no voters to be bribed, &c." and string on negatives, as long as he thought proper.

What then are we to do, when we hear such panegyric?—Are we to deny the facts?—That cannot be.—Are we to admit the conclusion?—That appears not quite agreeable.—No method is left, but to compare evils with evils; the evils of 1066 with those of 1780; and see whether the former age had not evils of its own, such as the present never experienced, because they do not now exist.

We may allow the evils of the present day to be real—we may even allow that a much larger number might have been added—but then we may alledge evils, by way of return, felt in those days severely, but now not felt at all.

We may assert, "we have not now, as happened then, seen our country conquered by foreign invaders, nor our property taken from us, and distributed among the conquerors; nor ourselves, from freemen, debased into slaves; nor our rights submitted to unknown laws,

"imported, without our consent, from foreign countries."

Should the same reasonings be urged in favour of times nearly as remote, and other imputations of evil be brought, which, though well known now, did not then exist, we may still retort that—"we are no longer now, as they were then, subject to feudal oppression; nor dragged to war, as they were then, by the petty tyrant of a neighbouring castle; nor involved in scenes of blood, as they were then, and that for many years, during the uninteresting disputes between a Stephen and a Maud."

Should the same declaimer pass to a later period, and praise, after the same manner, the reign of Henry the Second, we have then to retort, "that we have now no Becket." Should he proceed to Richard the First, "that we have now no holy wars"—to John Lackland, and his son Henry, "that we have now no barons wars"—and with regard to both of them, "that, though we enjoy at this instant all the benefits of Magna Charta, we have not been compelled to purchase them at the price of our blood."

A series of convulsions, bring us, in a few years more, to the wars between the houses of York and Lancaster—thence from the fall of the Lancaster family to the calamities of the York family, and its final destruction in Richard the Third—thence to the oppressive period of his avaricious successor; and from him to the formidable reign of his relentless son, when neither the coronet, nor the mitre, nor even the crown, could protect their wearers; and when (to the amazement of posterity) those, by whom church authority was denied, and those, by whom it was maintained, were dragged together to Smithfield, and burnt at one and the same stake.

The reign of his successor was short and turpid, and soon followed by the gloomy one of a bigotted woman.

We stop here, thinking we have instances enough. Those, who hear any portion of these past times praised for the invidious purpose above-mentioned, may answer by thus retorting the calamities and crimes which existed at the time praised, but which now exist no more. A true estimate can never be formed, but in consequence of such a comparison; for if we drop the laudable, and alledge only the bad, or drop the bad, and alledge only the laudable, there is no age, whatever its real character, but

may

may be made to pass at pleasure either for a good one or a bad one.

If I may be permitted in this place to add an observation, it shall be an observation founded upon many years experience. I have often heard declamations against the present race of men; declamations against them, as if they were the worst of animals; treacherous, false, selfish, envious, oppressive, tyrannical, &c. &c. This (I say) I have often heard from grave declaimers, and have heard the sentiment delivered with a kind of oracular pomp.—Yet I never heard any such declaimer say (what would have been sincere at least, if it had been nothing more) “I prove my assertion by an example, where I cannot err; I assert myself to be the wretch I have been just describing.”

So far from this, it would be perhaps dangerous to ask him, even in a gentle whisper—“You have been talking, with much confidence, about certain profligate beings—Are you certain, that you yourself are not one of the number?”

I hope I may be pardoned for the following anecdote, although compelled, in relating it, to make myself a party.

“Sitting once in my library with a friend, a worthy but melancholy man, I read him, out of a book, the following passage—

“In our time it may be spoken more truly than of old, that virtue is gone; the church is under foot; the clergy is in error; the devil reigneth, &c. &c. My friend interrupted me with a sigh, and said, Alas! how true! How just a picture of the times!—I asked him, of what times?—Of what times! replied he with emotion; can you suppose any other but the present? were any before ever so bad, so corrupt, so, &c.?—Forgive me (said I) for stopping you—the times I am reading of are older than you imagine; the sentiment was delivered about four hundred years ago; its author Sir John Mandeville, who died in 1371.”

As man is by nature a social animal, good-humour seems an ingredient highly necessary to his character. It is the salt which gives a seasoning to the feast of life; and which, if it be wanting, surely renders the feast incomplete. Many causes contribute to impair this amiable quality, and nothing perhaps more than bad opinions of mankind. Bad opinions of mankind naturally lead us to Misanthropy. If these bad opinions go farther, and are applied

to the universe, then they lead to something worse, for they lead to Atheism. The melancholy and morose character being thus insensibly formed, morals and piety sink of course; for what equals have we to love, or what superior have we to revere, when we have no other objects left than those of hatred or of terror?

It should seem then expedient, if we value our better principles, nay, if we value our own happiness, to withstand such dreary sentiments. It was the advice of a wise man—“Say not thou, what is the cause that the former days were better than these? For thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.” Eccl. vii. 10.

Things present make impressions amazingly superior to things remote; so that, in objects of every kind, we are easily mistaken as to their comparative magnitude. Upon the canvass of the same picture a near sparrow occupies the space of a distant eagle; a near mole-hill, that of a distant mountain. In the perpetration of crimes there are few persons, I believe, who would not be more shocked at actually seeing a single man assassinated (even taking away the idea of personal danger) than they would be shocked in reading the massacre of Paris.

The wise man, just quoted, wishes to save us from these errors. He has already informed us—“The thing that hath been, is that which shall be; and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? It hath been already of old time, which was before us.” He then subjoins the cause of this apparent novelty—“things past, when they return, appear new, if they are forgotten; and things present will appear so, should they too be forgotten, when they return.” Eccl. i. 9. ii. 16.

This forgetfulness of what is similar in events which return (for in every returning event such similarity exists) is the forgetfulness of a mind uninstructed and weak; a mind ignorant of that great, that providential circulation, which never ceases for a moment through every part of the universe.

It is not like that forgetfulness which I once remember in a man of letters; who when, at the conclusion of a long life, he found his memory began to fail, said cheerfully—“Now I shall have a pleasure I could not have before; that of reading my old books, and finding them all new,”

There

There was in this consolation something philosophical and pleasing. And yet perhaps it is a higher philosophy (could we attain it) not to forget the past, but in contemplation of the past to view the future; so that we may say, on the worst prospects, with a becoming resignation, what Eneas said of old to the Cumean Prophets,

——— Virgin, no scenes of ill
To me, or new, or unexpected rise;
I've seen 'em all; have seen, and long before
Within myself revolv'd 'em in my mind.
Æn. VI. 103, 104, 105.

In such a conduct, if well founded, there is not only fortitude, but piety: Fortitude, which never sinks, from a conscious integrity; and Piety, which never desists, by referring all to the Divine Will.

Harris.

§ 216. *The Character of the Man of Business often united with, and adorned by that of the Scholar and Philosopher.*

Philosophy, taking its name from the love of wisdom, and having for its end the investigation of truth, has an equal regard both to practice and speculation, in as much as truth of every kind is similar and congenial. Hence we find that some of the most illustrious actors upon the great theatre of the world have been engaged at times in philosophical speculation. Pericles, who governed Athens, was the disciple of Anaxagoras; Epaminondas spent his youth in the Pythagorean school; Alexander the Great had Aristotle for his preceptor; and Scipio made Polybius his companion and friend. Why need I mention Cicero, or Cato, or Brutus? The orations, the epistles, and the philosophical works of the first, shew him sufficiently conversant both in action and contemplation. So eager was Cato for knowledge, even when surrounded with business, that he used to read philosophy in the senate-house, while the senate was assembling; and as for the patriot Brutus, though his life was a continual scene of the most important actions, he found time not only to study, but to compose a Treatise upon Virtue.

When these were gone, and the worst of times succeeded, Thrasea Pætus, and Helvidius Priscus, were at the same period both senators and philosophers; and appear to have supported the severest trials of ty-

rannic oppression, by the manly system of the Stoic moral. The best emperor whom the Romans, or perhaps any nation, ever knew, Marcus Antoninus, was involved during his whole life in business of the last consequence; sometimes conspiracies forming, which he was obliged to dissipate; formidable wars arising at other times, when he was obliged to take the field. Yet during none of these periods did he forsake philosophy, but still persisted in meditation, and in committing his thoughts to writing, during moments, gained by stealth from the hurry of courts and campaigns.

If we descend to later ages, and search our own country, we shall find Sir Thomas More, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Raleigh, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Milton, Algernon Sidney, Sir William Temple, and many others, to have been all of them eminent in public life, and yet at the same time conspicuous for their speculations and literature. If we look abroad, examples of like characters will occur in other countries. Grotius, the poet, the critic, the philosopher, and the divine, was employed by the court of Sweden as ambassador to France; and De Witt, that acute but unfortunate statesman, that pattern of parsimony and political accomplishments, was an able mathematician, wrote upon the Elements of Curves, and applied his algebra with accuracy to the trade and commerce of his country.

And so much in defence of Philosophy, against those who may possibly undervalue her, because they have succeeded without her; those I mean (and it must be confessed they are many) who, having spent their whole lives in what Milton calls the "busy hum of men," have acquired to themselves habits of amazing efficacy, unassisted by the helps of science and erudition. To such the retired student may appear an awkward being, because they want a just standard to measure his merit. But let them recur to the bright examples before alledged; let them remember that these were eminent in their own way; were men of action and business; men of the world; and yet did they not disdain to cultivate philosophy, nay, were many of them perhaps indebted to her for the splendor of their active character.

This reasoning has a farther end. It justifies me in the address of these philosophical arrangements, as your Lordship

ship* has been distinguished in either character, I mean in your public one, as well as in your private. Those who know the history of our foreign transactions, know the reputation that you acquired in Germany, by negotiations of the last importance: and those who are honoured with your nearer friendship, know that you can speculate as well as act, and can employ your pen both with elegance and instruction.

It may not perhaps be unentertaining to your Lordship to see in what manner the 'Preceptor of Alexander the Great arranged his pupil's ideas, so that they might not cause confusion, for want of accurate disposition.' It may be thought also a fact worthy your notice, that he became acquainted with this method from the venerable Pythagoras, who, unless he drew it from remoter sources, to us unknown, was, perhaps, himself its inventor and original teacher.

Harris.

§ 217. *The Progressions of Art disgusting, the Completions beautiful.*

Fables relate that Venus was wedded to Vulcan, the goddess of beauty to the god of deformity. The tale, as some explain it, gives a double representation of art; Vulcan shewing us the progressions of art, and Venus the completions. The progressions, such as the hewing of stone, the grinding of colours, the fusion of metals, these all of them are laborious, and many times disgusting; the completions, such as the temple, the palace, the picture, the statue, these all of them are beauties, and justly call for admiration.

Now if logic be one of those arts, which help to improve human reason, it must necessarily be an art of the progressive character; an art which, not ending with itself, has a view to something farther. If then, in the speculations upon it, it should appear dry rather than elegant, severe rather than pleasing, let it plead, by way of defence, that, though its importance may be great, it partakes from its very nature (which cannot be changed) more of the deformed god, than of the beautiful goddess.

Ibid.

§ 218. *Thoughts on Elegance.*

Having answered the objections usually brought against a permanent sense of

beauty, let us now proceed to single out the particular species or kinds of beauty; and begin with elegance of person, that so wonderfully elevates the human character.

Elegance, the most undoubted offspring and visible image of fine taste, the moment it appears, is universally admired: men disagree about the other constituent parts of beauty, but they all unite without hesitation to acknowledge the power of elegance.

The general opinion is, that this most conspicuous part of beauty, that is perceived and acknowledged by every body, is yet utterly inexplicable, and retires from our search when we would discover what it is. Where shall I find the secret retreat of the graces, to explain to me the elegance they dictate, and to paint, in visible colours, the fugitive and varying enchantment that hovers round a graceful person, yet leaves us for ever in agreeable suspense and confusion? I need not seek for them, madam; the graces are but emblems of the human mind, in its loveliest appearances; and while I write for you, it is impossible not to feel their influence.

Personal elegance, for that is the object of our present enquiry, may be defined the image and reflection of the grandeur and beauty of the invisible soul. Grandeur and beauty in the soul itself are not objects of sense; colours cannot paint them, but they are united to sentiments that appear visible; they bestow a noble meaning and importance of attitude, and diffuse inexpressible loveliness over the person.

When two or more passions or sentiments unite, they are not so readily distinguished, as if they had appeared separate; however, it is easy to observe, that the complacency and admiration we feel in the presence of elegant persons, is made up of respect and affection; and that we are disappointed when we see such persons act a base or indecent part. These symptoms plainly shew, that personal elegance appears to us to be the image and reflection of an elevated and beautiful mind. In some characters, the grandeur of soul is predominant; in whom beauty is majestic and awful. In this style is Miss F—. In other characters, a soft and attracting grace is more conspicuous: this latter kind is more pleasing, for an obvious reason. But elegance

* Addressed to the right honourable Thomas Lord Hyde, chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, &c.

elegance cannot exist in either alone, without a mixture of the other; for majesty without the beautiful, would be haughty and disgusting; and easy accessible beauty would lose the idea of elegance, and become an object of contempt.

The grandeur and beauty of the soul charm us universally, who have all of us implanted in our bosoms, even in the midst of misery, passions of high descent, immense ambition, and romantic hopes. You may conceive an imprisoned bird, whose wild notes, prompted by the approach of spring, gave her a confused notion of joy, although she has no distinct idea of airy flights and summer groves; so when man emerging from wretchedness assumes a nobler character, and the elevation of the human genius appears openly, we view, with secret joy and delightful amazement, the sure evidence and pledge of our dignity: the mind catches fire by a train that lies within itself, and expands with conscious pride and merit, like a generous youth over the images of his country's heroes. Of the softened and engaging part of elegance, I shall have occasion to speak at large hereafter.

Personal elegance or grace is a fugitive lustre, that never settles in any part of the body, you see it glance and disappear in the features and motions of a graceful person; it strikes your view; it shines like an exhalation: but the moment you follow it, the wandering flame vanishes, and immediately lights up in something else: you may as well think of fixing the pleasing delusion of your dreams, or the colours of a dissolving rainbow.

You have arisen early at times, in the summer season, to take the advantage of the cool of the morning, to ride abroad. Let us suppose you have mistaken an hour or two, and just got out a few minutes before the rising of the sun. You see the fields and woods that lay the night before in obscurity, attiring themselves in beauty and verdure; you see a profusion of brilliants shining in the dew; you see the stream gradually admitting the light into its pure bosom; and you hear the birds, which are awakened by a rapture, that comes upon them from the morning. If the eastern sky be clear, you see it glow with the promise of a flame that has not yet appeared; and if

it be overcast with clouds, you see those clouds stained by a bright red, bordered with gold or silver, that by the changes appear volatile, and ready to vanish. How various and beautiful are those appearances, which are not the sun, but the distant effects of it over different objects! In like manner the soul flings inexpressible charms over the human person, and actions; but then the cause is less known, because the soul for ever shines behind a cloud, and is always retired from our senses.

You conceive why elegance is of a fugitive nature, and exists chiefly in motion: as it is communicated by the principle of action that governs the whole person, it is found over the whole body, and is fixed no where. The curious eye with eagerness pursues the wandering beauty, which it sees with surprize at every turn, but is never able to overtake. It is a waving flame, that, like the reflection of the sun from water, never settles; it glances on you in every motion and disposition of the body: its different powers through attitude and motion seem to be collected in dancing, wherein it plays over the arms, the legs, the breast, the neck, and in short the whole frame: but if grace has any fixed throne, it is in the face, the residence of the soul, where you think a thousand times it is just issuing into view.

Elegance assumes to itself an empire equal to that of the soul; it rules and inspires every part of the body, and makes use of all the human powers; but it particularly takes the passions under its charge and direction, and turns them into a kind of artillery, with which it does infinite execution.

The passions that are favourites with the graces are modesty, good nature, particularly when it is heightened by a small colouring of affection into *sweetness*, and that fine languor which seems to be formed of a mixture of still joy and hope. Surprize, shame, and even grief and anger, have appeared pleasing under proper restrictions; for it must be observed, that all excess is shocking and disagreeable, and that even the most pleasing passions appear to most advantage when the tincture they cast over the countenance is enfeebled and gentle. The passions that are enemies to the graces are, impudence, affectation, strong and harsh degrees of pride, malice and austerity.

There

There is an union of the fine passions, but so delicate that you cannot conceive any one of them separate from the rest, called *sensibility*, which is requisite in an elegant deportment; it chiefly resides in the eye, which is indeed the seat of the passions.

I have spoken of the passions only as they are subservient to grace, which is the object of our present attention. The face is the mother-country, if I may call it so, or the habitation of grace; and it visits the other parts of the body only as distant provinces, with some little partiality to the neck, and the fine basis that supports it; but the countenance is the very palace in which it takes up its residence; it is there it revels through its various apartments: you see it wrapped in clouded majesty upon the brow; you discover it about the lips hardly rising to a smile, and vanishing in a moment, when it is rather perceived than seen; and then by the most engaging vicissitudes, it enlivens, flames, and dissolves in the eye.

You have, I suppose, all along observed, that I am not treating of beauty, which depends on different principles, but of that elegance which is the effect of a delicate and awakened taste, and in every kind of form is the enchantment that attracts and pleases universally, even without the assistance of any other charm; whereas without it no degree of beauty is charming. You have undoubtedly seen women lovely without much beauty, and handsome without being lovely; it is gracefulness causes this variation, and throws a lustre over disagreeable features, as the sun paints a showery cloud with the colours of the rainbow.

I before remarked, that the grace of every elegant person is varied agreeable to the character and disposition of the person it beautifies; I am sensible you readily conceive the reason. Elegance is the natural habit and image of the soul beaming forth in action; it must therefore be expressed by the peculiar features, air, and disposition of the person; it must arise from nature, and flow with ease and a propriety that distinguishes it. The imitation of any particular person, however graceful, is dangerous, lest the affectation appear; but the unstudied elegance of nature is acquired by the example and conversation of several elegant persons of different characters, which peo-

ple adapt to the import of their own gestures, without knowing how.

It is also because elegance is the reflection of the soul appearing in action, that good statues, and pictures drawn from life, are laid before the eye in motion. If you look at the old Gothic churches built in barbarous ages, you will see the statues reared up dead and inanimate against the walls.

I said, at the beginning of this little discourse, that the beauty of dress results from mode or fashion, and it certainly does so in a great measure; but I must limit that assertion by the following observation, that there is also a real beauty in attire that does not depend on the mode: those robes which leave the whole person at liberty in its motions, and that give to the imagination the natural proportions and symmetry of the body, are always more becoming than such as restrain any part of the body, or in which it is lost or disfigured. You may easily imagine how a pair of stays laced tightly about the Minerva we admired, would oppress the sublime beauty of her comportment and figure. Since persons of rank cannot chuse their own dress, but must run along with the present fashion, the secret of dressing gracefully must consist in the slender variations that cannot be observed to desert the fashion, and yet approach nigher to the complexion and import of the countenance, and that at the same time allows to the whole body the greatest possible freedom, ease, and imagery: by imagery I mean, that as a good painter will shew the effect of the muscles that do not appear to the eye, so a person skilful in dress will display the elegance of the form, though it be covered and out of view. As the taste of dress approaches to perfection all art disappears, and it seems the effect of negligence and instinctive inattention; for this reason its beauties arise from the manner and general air rather than from the richness, which last, when it becomes too gross and oppressive, destroys the elegance. A brilliancy and parade in dress is therefore the infallible sign of bad taste, that in this contraband manner endeavours to make amends for the want of true elegance, and bears a relation to the heaps of ornament that encumbered the Gothic buildings. Apelles observing an Helen painted by one of his scholars, that was overcharged with a rich dress, "I find, young man,"

said

said he, "not being able to paint her beautiful, you have made her fine."

Harsh and violent motions are always unbecoming. Milton attributes the same kind of motion to his angels that the Heathens did to their deities, *soft, sliding, without step*. It is impossible to preserve the attractions in a country dance that attend on a minuet; as the step quickens, the most delicate of the graces retire. The rule holds universally through all action, whether quick or slow; it should always partake of the same polished and softened motion, particularly in the transitions of the countenance, where the genius of the person seems to hover and reside.

The degrees run very high upon the scale of elegance, and probably few have arrived near the highest pitch; but it is certain, that the idea of surprising beauty, that was familiar in Greece, has been hardly conceived by the moderns: many of their statues remain the objects of our admiration, but wholly superior to imitation; their pictures, that have sunk in the wreck of time, appear in the descriptions made of them to have equal imagination with the statues; and their poetry abounds with the same celestial imagery. But what puts this matter out of doubt is, that their celebrated beauties were the models of their artists, and it is known, that the elegancies of Thais and Phryne were copied by the famous painters of Greece, and consigned to canvass and marble to astonish and charm distant ages.

Personal elegance, in which taste assumes the most conspicuous and noble appearance, confuses us in our enquiries after it, by the quickness and variety of its changes, as well as by a complication that is not easily unravelled. I defined it to be the image and reflection of a great and beautiful soul; let us separate the distinct parts of this variety; when they appear asunder you will find them perfectly familiar and intelligible.

The first, and most respectable part, that enters into the composition of elegance, is the lofty consciousness of worth or virtue, which sustains an habitual decency, and becoming pride.

The second, and most pleasing part, is a display of good-nature approaching to affection, of gentle affability, and, in general, of the pleasing passions. It seems difficult to reconcile these two parts, and in fact it is so; but when they unite, then they appear like a reserved and virgin

kindness, that is at once noble and soft, that may be won, but must be courted with delicacy.

The third part of elegance is the appearance of a polished and tranquil habit of mind, that softens the actions and emotions, and gives a covert prospect of innocence and undisturbed repose. I will treat of these separate, and first of dignity of soul.

I observed, near the beginning of this discourse, in answer to an objection you made, that the mind has always a taste for truth, for gratitude, for generosity, and greatness of soul: these, which are peculiarly called *sentiments*, stamp upon the human spirit a dignity and worth not to be found in any other animated being. However great and surprising the most glorious objects in nature be, the heaving ocean, the moon that guides it, and casts a softened lustre over the night, the starry firmament, or the sun itself; yet their beauty and grandeur instantly appear of an inferior kind, beyond all comparison, to this of the soul of man. These sentiments are united under the general name of virtue; and such are the embellishments they diffuse over the mind, that Plato, a very polite philosopher, says, finely, "If Virtue was to appear in a visible shape, all men would be enamoured of her."

Virtue and truth are inseparable, and take their flight together. A mind devoid of truth is a frightful wreck; it is like a great city in ruins, whose mouldering towers, just bring to the imagination the mirth and life that once were there, and is now no more. Truth is the genius of taste, and enters into the essence of simple beauty, in wit, in writing, and throughout the fine arts.

Generosity covers almost all other defects, and raises a blaze around them in which they disappear and are lost: like sovereign beauty, it makes a short cut to our affections; it wins our hearts without resistance or delay, and unites all the world to favour and support its designs.

Grandeur of soul, fortitude, and a resolution that haughtily struggles with despair, and will neither yield to, nor make terms with misfortunes; which, through every situation, reposes a noble confidence in itself, and has an immovable view to future glory and honour, astonishes the world with admiration and delight. We, as it were, lean forward with surprise and trembling joy to behold the human soul collecting its strength

strength, and asserting a right to superior fates. When you leave man out of your account, and view the whole visible creation beside, you indeed see several traces of grandeur and unspeakable power, and the intermixture of a rich scenery of beauty; yet still the whole appears to be but a solemn absurdity, and to have a littleness and insignificance. But when you restore man to prospect, and put him at the head of it, endued with genius and an immortal soul; when you give him a passion for truth, boundless views that spread along through eternity, and a fortitude that struggles with fate, and yields not to misfortunes, then the skies, the ocean, and the earth, take the stamp of worth and dignity from the noble inhabitant whose purposes they serve.

A mind fraught with the virtues is the natural soil of elegance. Unaffected truth, generosity, and grandeur of soul, for ever please and charm: even when they break from the common forms, and appear wild and unmethodized by education, they are still beautiful. On the contrary, as soon as we discover that outward elegance, which is formed by the mode, to want truth, generosity, or grandeur of soul, it instantly sinks in our esteem like counterfeit coin, and we are sensible of a reluctant disappointment, like that of the lover in the epigram, who became enamoured with the lady's voice and the softness of her hand in the dark, but was cured of his passion as soon as he had light to view her.

Let us now pass on to the most pleasing part of elegance, an habitual display of the kind and gentle passions.

We are naturally inclined to love those who bear an affection to us; and we are charmed with the homage that is paid to our merit: by these weaknesses politeness attacks us. The well-bred gentleman always in his behaviour insinuates a regard to others, tempered with respect. His attention to please confesses plainly his kindness to you, and the high esteem he holds you in. The assiduous prevention of our wishes, and that yielding sweetness complaisance puts on for our sake, are irresistible; and although we know this kind of flattery to be prostitute and habitual, yet it is not indifferent to us; we receive it in a manner that shows how much it gratifies us.

The desire of being agreeable, finds out the art of being so without study or labour. Rustics who fall in love, grow unusually polite and engaging. This new charm, that

has altered their natures, and suddenly endued them with the powers of pleasing, is nothing more than an enlivened attention to please, that has taken possession of their minds, and tintured their actions. We ought not to wonder that love is thus enchanting: its tender assiduity is but the natural address of the passion; politeness borrows the flattering form of affection, and becomes agreeable by the appearance of kindness.

What pleases us generally appears beautiful. Complaisance, that is so engaging, gives an agreeableness to the whole person, and creates a beauty that nature gave not to the features; it submits, it promises, it applauds in the countenance; the heart lays itself in smiles at your feet, and a voice that is indulgent and tender, is always heard with pleasure.

The last constituent part of elegance is the picture of a tranquil soul, that appears in softening the actions and emotions, and exhibits a retired prospect of happiness and innocence.

A calm of mind that is seen in graceful easy action, and in the enfeeblement of our passions, gives us an idea of the golden age, when human nature, adorned with innocence, and the peace that attends it, reposed in the arms of content. This serene prospect of human nature always pleases us; and although the content, whose image it is, be visionary in this world, and we cannot arrive at it, yet it is the point in imagination we have finally in view, in all the pursuits of life, and the native home for which we do not cease to languish.

The sentiment of tranquillity particularly beautifies pastoral poetry. The images of calm and happy quiet that appear in shaded groves, in silent vales, and slumbers by falling streams, invite the poet to indulge his genius in rural scenes. The music that lulls and composes the mind, at the same time enchants it. The hue of this beauteous ease, cast over the human actions and emotions, forms a very delightful part of elegance, and gives the other constituent parts an appearance of nature and truth: for in a tranquil state of mind, undisturbed by wants or fears, the views of men are generous and elevated. From the combination of these fine parts, grandeur of soul, complacency, and ease, arise the enchantments of elegance; but the appearance of the two last are oftener found together, and then they form Politeness.

When we take a view of the separate

parts that constitute personal elegance, we immediately know the seeds that are proper to be cherished in the infant mind, to bring forth the beauteous production. The virtues should be cultivated early with sacred care. Good-nature, modesty, affability, and a kind concern for others, should be carefully inculcated; and an easy unconstrained dominion acquired by habit over the passions. A mind thus finely prepared, is capable of the highest lustre of elegance; which is afterwards attained with as little labour as our first language, by only associating with graceful people of different characters, from whom an habitual gracefulness will be acquired, that will bear the natural unaffected stamp of our own minds; in short, it will be our own character and genius stripped of its native rudeness, and enriched with beauty and attraction.

Nature, that bestows her favours without respect of persons, often denies to the great the capacity of distinguished elegance, and flings it away in obscure villages. You sometimes see it at a country fair spread an amiableness over a sun-burnt girl, like the light of the moon through a mist; but such, madam, is the necessity of habitual elegance acquired by education and converse, that if even you were born in that low class, you could be no more than the fairest damsel at the may-pole, and the object of the hope and jealousy of a few rustics.

People are rendered totally incapable of elegance by the want of good-nature, and the other gentle passions; by the want of modesty and sensibility; and by a want of that noble pride, which arises from a consciousness of lofty and generous sentiments. The absence of these native charms is generally supplied by a brisk stupidity, an impudence unconscious of defect, a cast of malice, and an uncommon tendency to ridicule; as if nature had given these her step-children an instinctive intelligence, that they can rise out of contempt only by the depression of others. For the same reason it is, that persons of true and finished taste seldom affect ridicule, because they are conscious of their own superior merit. Pride is the cause of ridicule in the one, as it is of candour in the other; but the effects differ as the studied parade of poverty does from the negligent grandeur of riches. You will see nothing more common in the world, than for people, who by stupidity and insensibility are incapable of the graces, to commence wits on the

strength of the *petite* talents of mimicry and the brisk tartness that ill-nature never fails to supply.

From what I have said it appears, that a sense of elegance is a sense of dignity, of virtue, and innocence, united. Is it not natural then to expect, that in the course of a liberal education, men should cultivate the generous qualities they approve and assume? But instead of them, men only aim at the appearances, which require no self-denial; and thus, without acquiring the virtues, they sacrifice their honesty and sincerity: whence it comes to pass, that there is often the least virtue, where there is the greatest appearance of it; and that the polished part of mankind only arrive at the subtil corruption, of uniting vice with the dress and complexion of virtue.

I have dwelt on personal elegance, because the ideas and principles in this part of good taste are more familiar to you. We may then take them for a foundation, in our future observations, since the same principles of easy grace and simple grandeur, will animate our ideas with an unstudied propriety, and enlighten our judgments in beauty, in literature, in sculpture, painting, and the other departments of fine taste.

Usher.

§ 219. On Personal Beauty.

I shall but slightly touch on our taste of personal beauty, because it requires no directions to be known. To ask what is beauty, says a philosopher, is the question of a blind man. I shall therefore only make a few reflections on this head, that lie out of the common track. But, prior to what I have to say, it is necessary to make some observations on physiognomy.

There is an obvious relation between the mind and the turn of the features, so well known by instinct, that every one is more or less expert at reading the countenance. We look as well as speak our minds; and amongst people of little experience, the look is generally most sincere. This is so well understood, that it is become a part of education to learn to disguise the countenance, which yet requires a habit from early youth, and the continual practice of hypocrisy, to deceive an intelligent eye. The natural virtues and vices not only have their places in the aspect, even acquired habits that much affect the mind settle there; contemplation, in length of time, gives a cast of thought on the countenance.

Now to come back to our subject. The

assemblage

assemblage called beauty, is the image of noble sentiments and amiable passions in the face; but so blended and confused that we are not able to separate and distinguish them. The mind has a sensibility, and clear knowledge, in many instances without reflection, or even the power of reasoning upon its own perceptions. We can no more account for the relation between the passions of the mind and a set of features, than we can account for the relation between the sounds of music and the passions; the eye is judge of the one without principles or rules, as the ear is of the other. It is impossible you should not take notice of the remarkable difference of beauty in the same face, in a good and in ill humour: and if the gentle passions, in an indifferent face, do not change it to perfect beauty, it is because nature did not originally model the features to the just and familiar expression of those passions, and the genuine expressions of nature can never be wholly obliterated. But it is necessary to observe, that the engaging import that forms beauty, is often the symbol of passions that, although pleasing, are dangerous to virtue; and that a firmness of mind, whose cast of feature is much less pleasing, is more favourable to virtue. From the affinity between beauty and the passions it must follow, that beauty is relative, that is, a sense of human beauty is confined to our species; and also, as far as we have power over the passions, we are able to improve the face, and transplant charms into it; both of which observations have been often made. From the various principles of beauty, and the agreeable combinations, of which the face gives intelligence, springs that variety found in the style of beauty.

Complexion is a kind of beauty that is only pleasing by association. The brown, the fair, the black, are not any of them original beauty; but when the complexion is united in one picture on the imagination, with the assemblage that forms the image of the tender passions, with gentle smiles, and kind endearments, it is then inseparable from our idea of beauty, and forms a part of it. From the same cause, a national set of features appear amiable to the inhabitants, who have been accustomed to see the amiable dispositions through them. This observation resolves a difficulty, that often occurs in the reflections of men on our present subject. We all speak of beauty as if it were acknowledged and settled by a public standard; yet we find, in fact, that people, in placing their affections, often have little

regard to the common notions of beauty. The truth is, complexion and form being the charms that are visible and conspicuous, the common standard of beauty is generally restrained to those general attractions; but since personal grace and the engaging passions, although they cannot be delineated, have a more universal and uniform power, it is no wonder people, in resigning their hearts, so often contradict the common received standard. Accordingly, as the engaging passions and the address are discovered in conversation, the tender attachments of people are generally fixed by an intercourse of sentiment, and seldom by a transient view, except in romances and novels. It is further to be observed, that when once the affections are fixed, a new face with a higher degree of beauty will not always have a higher degree of power to remove them, because our affections arise from a source within ourselves, as well as from external beauty; and when the tender passion is attached by a particular object, the imagination surrounds that object with a thousand ideal embellishments that exist only in the mind of the lover.

The history of the short life of beauty may be collected from what I have said. In youth that borders on infancy, the passions are in a state of vegetation, they only appear in full bloom in maturity; for which reason the beauty of youth is no more than the dawn and promise of future beauty. The features, as we grow into years, gradually form along with the mind: different sensibilities gather into the countenance, and become beauty there, as colours mount in a tulip, and enrich it. When the eloquent force and delicacy of sentiment has continued some little time, age begins to stiffen the features, and destroy the engaging variety and vivacity of the countenance, the eye gradually loses its fire, and is no longer the mirror of the agreeable passions. Finally, old age furrows the face with wrinkles, as a barbarous conqueror overturns a city from the foundation, and transitory beauty is extinguished.

Beauty and elegance are nearly related, their difference consists in this, that elegance is the image of the mind displayed in motion and deportment; beauty is an image of the mind in the countenance and form; consequently beauty is of a more fixed nature, and owes less to art and habit.

When I speak of beauty, it is not wholly out of my way to make a singular observation on the tender passion in our species.

Innocent and virtuous love casts a beautiful hue over human nature; it quickens and strengthens our admiration of virtue, and our detestation of vice; it opens our eyes to our imperfections, and gives us a pride in excelling; it inspires us with heroic sentiments, generosity, a contempt of life, a boldness for enterprise, chastity, and purity of sentiment. It takes a similitude to devotion, and almost deifies the object of passion. People whose breasts are dulled with vice, or stupified by nature, call this passion romantic love; but when it was the mode, it was the diagnostic of a virtuous age. These symptoms of heroism spring from an obscure principle, that in a noble mind unites itself with every passionate view in life; this nameless principle is distinguished by endowing people with extraordinary powers and enthusiasm in the pursuit of their favourite wishes, and by disgust and disappointment when we arrive at the point where our wishes seem to be completed. It has made great conquerors despise dangers and death in their way to victory, and sigh afterwards when they had no more to conquer.

Usher.

§ 220. *On Conversation.*

From external beauty we come to the charms of conversation and writing. Words, by representing ideas, become the picture of our thoughts, and communicate them with the greatest fidelity. But they are not only the signs of sensible ideas, they exhibit the very image and distinguishing likeness of the mind that uses them.

Conversation does not require the same merit to please that writing does. The human soul is endued with a kind of natural expression, which it does not acquire. The expression I speak of consists in the significant modulations and tones of voice, accompanied, in unaffected people, by a propriety of gesture. This native language was not intended by nature to represent the transitory ideas that come by the senses to the imagination, but the passions of the mind and its emotions only; therefore modulation and gesture give life and passion to words; their mighty force in oratory is very conspicuous: but although their effects be milder in conversation, yet they are very sensible; they agitate the soul by a variety of gentle sensations, and help to form that sweet charm that makes the most trifling subjects engaging. This fine expression, which is

not learned, is not so much taken notice of as it deserves, because it is much superseded by the use of artificial and acquired language. The modern system of philosophy has also concurred to shut it out from our reflections.

It is in conversation people put on all their graces, and appear in the lustre of good-breeding. It is certain, good-breeding, that sets so great a distinction between individuals of the same species, creates nothing new (I mean a good education) but only draws forth into prospect, with skill and address, the agreeable dispositions and sentiments that lay latent in the mind. You may call good-breeding artificial; but it is like the art of a gardener, under whose hand a barren tree puts forth its own bloom, and is enriched with its specific fruit. It is scarce possible to conceive any scene so truly agreeable, as an assembly of people elaborately educated, who assume a character superior to ordinary life, and support it with ease and familiarity.

The heart is won in conversation by its own passions. Its pride, its grandeur, its affections, lay it open to the enchantment of an insinuating address. Flattery is a gross charm, but who is proof against a gentle and yielding disposition, that infers your superiority with a delicacy so fine, that you cannot see the lines of which it is composed? Generosity, disinterestedness, a noble love of truth that will not deceive, a feeling of the distresses of others, and greatness of soul, inspire us with admiration along with love, and take our affections as it were by storm; but, above all, we are seduced by a view of the tender and affectionate passions; they carry a soft infection, and the heart is betrayed to them by its own forces. If we are to judge from symptoms, the soul that engages us so powerfully by its reflected glances, is an object of infinite beauty. I observed before, that the modulations of the human voice that express the soul, move us powerfully; and indeed we are affected by the natural emotions of the mind expressed in the simplest language: in short, the happy art, that, in conversation and the intercourse of life, lays hold upon our affections, is but a just address to the engaging passions in the human breast. But this syren power, like beauty, is the gift of nature.

Soft pleasing speech and graceful outward show,
No arts can gain them, but the gods bestow.

POPE'S HOM.

From

From the various combinations of the several endearing passions and lofty sentiments, arise the variety of pleasing characters that beautify human society.

There is a different source of pleasure in conversation from what I have spoken of, called wit; which diverts the world so much, that I cannot venture to omit it, although delicacy and a refined taste hesitate a little, and will not allow its value to be equal to its currency. Wit deals largely in allusion and whimsical similitudes; its countenance is always double, and it unites the true and the fantastic by a nice gradation of colouring that cannot be perceived. You observe that I am only speaking of the ready wit of conversation.

Wit is properly called in to support a conversation where the heart or affections are not concerned; and its proper business is to relieve the mind from solitary inattention, where there is no room to move it by passion; the mind's eye, when disengaged, is diverted by being fixed upon a vapour, that dances, as it were, on the surface of the imagination, and continually alters its aspect: the motley image, whose comic side we had only time to survey, is too unimportant to be attentively considered, and luckily vanishes before we can view it on every side. Shallow folks expect that those who diverted them in conversation, and made happy *bon mots*, ought to write well; and imagine that they themselves were made to laugh by the force of genius: but they are generally disappointed when they see the admired character descend upon paper. The truth is, the frivolous turn and habit of a comic companion, is almost diametrically opposite to true genius, whose natural exercise is deep and slow-paced reflection. You may as well expect that a man should, like Cæsar, form consistent schemes for subduing the world, and employ the principal part of his time in catching flies. I have often heard people express a surprise, that Swift and Addison, the two greatest masters of humour of the last age, were easily put out of countenance, as if pun, mimicry, or rapartee, were the offspring of genius.

Whatever similitude may be between humour in writing, and humour in conversation, they are generally found to require different talents. Humour in writing is the offspring of reflection, and is by nice touches and labour brought to wear

the negligent air of nature; whereas, wit in conversation is an enemy to reflection, and glows brightest when the imagination flings off the thought the moment it arises, in its genuine new-born dress. Men a little elevated by liquor, seem to have a peculiar facility at striking out the capricious and fantastic images that raise our mirth; in fact, what we generally admire in sallies of wit, is the nicety with which they touch upon the verge of folly, indiscretion, or malice, while at the same time they preserve thought, subtlety, and good-humour; and what we laugh at is the motley appearance, whose whimsical consistency we cannot account for.

People are pleased at wit for the same reason that they are fond of diversion of any kind, not for the worth of the thing, but because the mind is not able to bear an intense train of thinking; and yet the ceasing of thought is insufferable, or rather impossible. In such an uneasy dilemma, the unsteady excursions of wit give the mind its natural action, without fatigue, and relieve it delightfully, by employing the imagination without requiring any reflection. Those who have an eternal appetite for wit, like those who are ever in quest of diversion, betray a frivolous minute genius, incapable of thinking.

Usher,

§ 221. On Music.

There are few who have not felt the charms of music, and acknowledged its expressions to be intelligible to the heart. It is a language of delightful sensations, that is far more eloquent than words; it breathes to the ear the clearest intimations; but how it was learned, to what origin we owe it, or what is the meaning of some of its most affecting strains, we know not.

We feel plainly that music touches and gently agitates the agreeable and sublime passions; that it wraps us in melancholy, and elevates in joy; that it dissolves and inflames; that it melts us in tenderness, and rouses to rage: but its strokes are so fine and delicate, that, like a tragedy, even the passions that are wounded please; its sorrows are charming, and its rage heroic and delightful; as people feel the particular passions with different degrees of force, their taste of harmony must proportionably vary. Music then is a language directed to the passions; but the rudest passions put on a new nature, and

become pleasing in harmony: let me add, also, that it awakens some passions which we perceive not in ordinary life. Particularly the most elevated sensation of music arises from a confused perception of ideal or visionary beauty and rapture, which is sufficiently perceivable to fire the imagination, but not clear enough to become an object of knowledge. This shadowy beauty the mind attempts, with a languishing curiosity, to collect into a distinct object of view and comprehension; but it sinks and escapes, like the dissolving ideas of a delightful dream, that are neither within the reach of the memory, nor yet totally fled. The noblest charm of music then, though real and affecting, seems too confused and fluid to be collected into a distinct idea. Harmony is always understood by the crowd, and almost always mistaken by musicians; who are, with hardly any exception, servile followers of the taste of mode, and who having expended much time and pains on the mechanic and practical part, lay a stress on the dexterities of hand, which yet have no real value, but as they serve to produce those collections of sound that move the passions. The present Italian taste for music is exactly correspondent to the taste of tragi-comedy, that about a century ago gained ground upon the stage. The musicians of the present day are charmed at the union they form between the grave and the fantastic, and at the surprising transitions they make between extremes, while every hearer who has the least remainder of the taste of nature left, is shocked at the strange jargon. If the same taste should prevail in painting, we must soon expect to see the woman's head, a horse's body, and a fish's tail, united by soft gradations, greatly admired at our public exhibitions. Musical gentlemen should take particular care to preserve in its full vigour and sensibility their original natural taste, which alone feels and discovers the true beauty of music.

If Milton, Shakespeare, or Dryden, had been born with the same genius and inspiration for music as for poetry, and had passed through the practical part without corrupting the natural taste, or blending with it prepossession in favour of the flights and dexterities of hand, then would their notes be tuned to passions and to sentiments as natural and expressive as the tones and modulations of the voice in discourse. The music and the thought

would not make different expressions: the hearers would only think impetuously; and the effect of the music would be to give the ideas a tumultuous violence and divine impulse upon the mind. Any person conversant with the classic poets, sees instantly that the passionate power of music I speak of, was perfectly understood and practised by the ancients; that the muses of the Greeks always sung, and their song was the echo of the subject, which swelled their poetry into enthusiasm and rapture. An enquiry into the nature and merits of the ancient music, and a comparison thereof with modern composition, by a person of poetic genius and an admirer of harmony, who is free from shackles of practice, and the prejudices of the mode, aided by the countenance of a few men of rank, of elevated and true taste, would probably lay the present half-Gothic mode of music in ruins, like those towers of whose little laboured ornaments it is an exact picture, and restore the Grecian taste of passionate harmony once more, to the delight and wonder of mankind. But as from the disposition of things, and the force of fashion, we cannot hope in our time to rescue the sacred lyre, and see it put into the hands of men of genius, I can only recall you to your own natural feeling of harmony, and observe to you, that its emotions are not found in the laboured, fantastic, and surprising compositions that form the modern style of music: but you meet them in some few pieces that are the growth of wild unvisited taste: you discover them in the swelling sounds that wrap us in imaginary grandeur; in those plaintive notes that make us in love with woe; in the tones that utter the lover's sighs, and fluctuate the breast with gentle pain; in the noble strokes that coil up the courage and fury of the soul, or that lull it in confused visions of joy: in short, in those affecting strains that find their way to the inward recesses of the heart:

Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony. *MILTON.*
Usher.

§ 222. On Sculpture and Painting.

Sculpture and painting have their standard in nature; and their principles differ only according to the different materials made use of in these arts. The variety of his colours, and the flat surface on which the painter is at liberty to raise his magic objects,

objects, give him a vast scope for ornament, variety, harmony of parts, and opposition, to please the mind, and divert it from too strict an examination. The sculptor being so much confined, has nothing to move with but beauty, passion, and force of attitude; sculpture therefore admits of no mediocrity; its works are either intolerable, or very fine. In Greece, the finishing of a single statue was often the work of many years.

Sculpture and painting take their merit from the same spirit that poetry does; a justness, a grandeur, and force of expression: and their principal objects are, the sublime, the beautiful, and the passionate. Painting, on account of its great latitude, approaches also very near to the variety of poetry; in general their principles vary only according to the different materials of each.

Poetry is capable of taking a series of successive facts, which comprehend a whole action from the beginning. It puts the passions in motion gradually, and winds them up by successive efforts, that all conduce to the intended effect; the mind could never be agitated so violently, if the storm had not come on by degrees: besides, language, by its capacity of representing thoughts, of forming the communication of mind with mind, and describing emotions, takes in several great, awful, and passionate ideas that colours cannot represent; but the painter is confined to objects of vision, or to one point or instant of time; and is not to bring into view any events which did not, or at least might not happen, at one and the same instant. The chief art of the history-painter, is to hit upon a point of time, that unites the whole successive action in one view, and strikes out the emotion you are desirous of raising. Some painters have had the power of preserving the traces of a receding passion, or the mixed disturbed emotions of the mind, without impairing the principal passion. The Medea of Timomachus was a miracle of this kind; her wild love, her rage, and her maternal pity, were all poured forth to the eye, in one portrait. From this mixture of passions, which is in nature, the murderers appeared dreadfully affecting.

It is very necessary, for the union of design in painting, that one principal figure appear eminently in view, and that all the rest be subordinate to it; that is,

the passion or attention of that principal object should give a cast to the whole piece: for instance, if it be a wrestler, or a courser in the race, the whole scene should not only be active, but the attentions and passions of the rest of the figures should all be directed by that object. If it be a fisherman over the stream, the whole scene must be silent and meditative; if ruins, a bridge, or waterfall, even the living persons must be subordinate, and the traveller should gaze and look back with wonder. This strict union and concord is rather more necessary in painting than in poetry: the reason is, painting is almost palpably a deception, and requires the utmost skill in selecting a vicinity of probable ideas, to give it the air of reality and nature. For this reason also nothing strange, wonderful, or shocking to credulity, ought to be admitted in paintings that are designed after real life.

The principal art of the landscape-painter lies in selecting those objects of view that are beautiful or great, provided there be a propriety and a just neighbourhood preserved in the assemblage, along with a careless distribution that solicits your eye to the principal object where it rests; in giving such a glance or confused view of those that retire out of prospect, as to raise curiosity, and create in the imagination affecting ideas that do not appear; and in bestowing as much life and action as possible, without overcharging the piece. A landscape is enlivened by putting the animated figures into action; by flinging over it the cheerful aspect which the sun bestows, either by a proper disposition of shade, or by the appearances that beautify his rising or setting; and by a judicious prospect of water, which always conveys the ideas of motion: a few dishevelled clouds have the same effect, but with somewhat less vivacity.

The excellence of portrait-painting and sculpture springs from the same principles that affect us in life; they are not the persons who perform at a comedy or tragedy we go to see with so much pleasure, but the passions and emotions they display: in like manner, the value of statues and pictures rises in proportion to the strength and clearness of the expression of the passions, and to the peculiar and distinguishing air of character. Great painters almost always chuse a fine face to exhibit the passions in. If you recollect what I said on beauty, you will easily conceive the reason

why the agreeable passions are most lively in a beautiful face; beauty is the natural vehicle of the agreeable passions. For the same reason the tempestuous passions appear strongest in a fine face; it suffers the most violent derangement by them. To which we may add, upon the same principle, that dignity or courage cannot be mixed in a very ill-favoured countenance; and that the painter after exerting his whole skill, finds in their stead pride and terror. These observations, which have been often made, serve to illustrate our thoughts on beauty. Besides the strict propriety of nature, sculpture and figure-painting is a kind of description, which, like poetry, is under the direction of genius; that, while it preserves nature, sometimes, in a fine flight of fancy, throws an ideal splendor over the figures that never existed in real life. Such is the sublime and celestial character that breathes over the Apollo Belvedere, and the inexpressible beauties that dwell upon the Venus of Medici, and seem to shed an illumination around her. This superior beauty must be varied with propriety, as well as the passions; the elegance of Juno, must be decent, lofty, and elated; of Minerva, masculine, confident, and chaste; and of Venus, winning, soft, and conscious of pleasing. These sister arts, painting and statuary, as well as poetry, put it out of all doubt, that the imagination carries the ideas of the beautiful and the sublime far beyond visible nature; since no mortal ever possessed the blaze of divine charms that surrounds the Apollo Belvedere, or the Venus of Medici, I have just mentioned.

A variety and flush of colouring is generally the refuge of painters, who are not able to animate their designs. We may call a lustre of colouring, the rant and sustenance of painting, under which are hid the want of strength and nature. None but a painter of real genius can be severe and modest in his colouring, and please at the same time. It must be observed, that the glow and variety of colours give a pleasure of a very different kind from the object of painting. When foreign ornaments, gilding, and carving come to be considered as necessary to the beauty of pictures, they are a plain diagnostic of a decay in taste and power.

Usher.

§ 223. On Architecture.

A free and easy proportion, united with simplicity, seem to constitute the elegance

of form in building. A subordination of parts to one evident design forms simplicity; when the members thus evidently related are great, the union is always very great. In the proportions of a noble edifice, you see the image of a creating mind result from the whole. The evident uniformity of the rotunda, and its unparalleled simplicity, are probably the sources of its superior beauty. When we look up at a vaulted roof, that seems to rest upon our horizon, we are astonished at the magnificence, more than at the visible extent.

When I am taking a review of the objects of beauty and grandeur, can I pass by unnoticed the source of colours and visible beauty? When the light is withdrawn all nature retires from view, visible bodies are annihilated, and the soul mourns the universal absence in solitude; when it returns, it brings along with it the creation, and restores joy as well as beauty.

Ibid.

§ 224. Thoughts on Colours and Lights.

If I should distinguish the perceptions of the senses from each other, according to the strength of the traces left on the imagination, I should call those of hearing, feeling, smelling, and tasting, *notions*, which impress the memory but weakly; while those of colours I should call *ideas*, to denote their strength and peculiar clearness upon the imagination. This distinction deserves particular notice. The author of nature has drawn an impenetrable veil over the fixed material world that surrounds us; solid matter refuses our acquaintance, and will be known to us only by resisting the touch; but how obscure are the informations of feeling? light comes like an intimate acquaintance to relieve us; it introduces all nature to us, the fields, the trees, the flowers, the crystal streams, and azure sky. But all this beauteous diversity is no more than an agreeable enchantment formed by the light that spreads itself to view; the fixed parts of nature are eternally entombed beneath the light, and we see nothing in fact but a creation of colours. Schoolmen, with their usual arrogance, will tell you their ideas are transcripts of nature, and assure you that the veracity of God requires they should be so, because we cannot well avoid thinking so: but nothing is an object of vision but light; the picture we see is not annexed to the earth, but comes with angelic celerity to meet our eyes. That which is called body or substance,

flance, that reflects the various colours of the light, and lies hid beneath the appearance, is wrapt in impenetrable obscurity; it is fatally shut out from our eyes and imagination, and only causes in us the ideas of feeling, tasting, or smelling, which yet are not resemblances of any part of matter. I do not know if I appear too strong when I call colours the expression of the Divinity. Light strikes with such vivacity and force, that we can hardly call it inanimate or unintelligent.

Usher.

§ 225. *On Uniformity.*

Shall we admit uniformity into our list of beauty, or first examine its real merits? When we look into the works of nature, we cannot avoid observing that uniformity is but the beauty of minute objects. The opposite sides of a leaf divided in the middle, and the leaves of the same species of vegetables, retain a striking uniformity; but the branch, the tree, and forest, desert this similarity, and take a noble irregularity with vast advantage. Cura tree into a regular form, and you change its lofty port for a minute prettiness. What forms the beauty of country scenes, but the want of uniformity? No two hills, vales, rivers, or prospects, are alike; and you are charmed by the variety. Let us now suppose a country made up of the most beautiful hills and descents imaginable, but every hill and every vale alike, and at an equal distance; they soon tire you, and you find the delight vanishes with the novelty.

There are, I own, certain assemblages that form a powerful beauty by their union, of which a fine face is incontestible evidence. But the charm does not seem by any means to reside in the uniformity, which in the human countenance is not very exact. The human countenance may be planned out much more regularly, but I fancy without adding to the beauty, for which we must seek another source. In truth, the finest eye in the world without meaning, and the finest mouth without a smile, are insipid. An agreeable countenance includes in the idea thereof an agreeable and gentle disposition. How the countenance, and an arrangement of colours and features, can express the idea of an unseen mind, we know not; but so the fact is, and to this fine intelligent picture, whether it be false or true, certain I am, that the beauty of the human countenance is owing, more than to uniformity. Shall we then say, that the greatest uniformity, along

with the greatest variety, forms beauty? But this is a repetition of words without distinct ideas, and explicates a well-known effect by an obscure cause. Uniformity, as far as it extends, excludes variety; and variety, as far as it reaches, excludes uniformity. Variety is by far more pleasing than uniformity, but it does not constitute beauty; for it is impossible that can be called beauty, which, when well known, ceases to please: whereas a fine piece of music shall charm after being heard a hundred times; and a lovely countenance makes a stronger impression on the mind by being often seen, because there beauty is real. I think we may, upon the whole, conclude, that if uniformity be a beauty, it is but the beauty of minute objects; and that it pleases only by the visible design, and the evident footsteps of intelligence it discovers.

Ibid.

§ 226. *On Novelty.*

I must say something of the evanescent charms of novelty. When our curiosity is excited at the opening of new scenes, our ideas are affecting and beyond life, and we see objects in a brighter hue than they after appear in. For when curiosity is sated, the objects grow dull, and our ideas fall to their diminutive natural size. What I have said may account for the raptured prospect of our youth we see backward; novelty always recommends, because expectations of the unknown are ever high; and in youth we have an eternal novelty; unexperienced credulous youth gilds our young ideas, and ever meets a fresh lustre that is not yet allayed by doubts. In age, experience corrects our hopes, and the imagination cools; for this reason, wisdom, and high pleasure do not reside together.

I have observed through this discourse, that the delight we receive from the visible objects of nature, or from the fine arts, may be divided into the conceptions of the sublime, and conceptions of the beautiful. Of the origin of the sublime I spoke hypothetically, and with diffidence; all we certainly know on this head is, that the sensations of the sublime we receive from external objects, are attended with obscure ideas of power and immensity; the origin of our sensations of beauty are still more unintelligible; however, I think there is some foundation for classing the objects of beauty under different heads, by a correspondence or similarity, that may be observed between several particulars.

Ibid.

§ 227.

§ 227. *On the Origin of our general Ideas of Beauty.*

A full and consistent evidence of design, especially if the design be attended with an important effect, gives the idea of beauty: thus a ship under sail, a greyhound, a well-shaped horse, are beautiful, because they display with ease a great design. Birds and beasts of prey, completely armed for destruction, are for the same reason beautiful, although objects of terror.

Where different designs at a single view, appear to concur to one effect, the beauty accumulates; as in the Grecian architecture: where different designs, leading to different effects, unite in the same whole, they cause confusion, and diminish the idea of beauty, as in the Gothic buildings. Upon the same principle, confusion and disorder are ugly or frightful; the figures made by spilled liquors are always ugly. Regular figures are handsome; and the circular, the most regular, is the most beautiful. This regulation holds only where the sublime does not enter; for in that case the irregularity and carelessness add to the ideas of power, and raise in proportion our admiration. The confusion in which we see the stars scattered over the heavens, and the rude arrangement of mountains, add to their grandeur.

A mixture of the sublime aids exceedingly the idea of beauty, and heightens the horrors of disorder and ugliness. Personal beauty is vastly raised by a noble air; on the contrary, the dissolution and ruins of a large city, distress the mind proportionally: but while we mourn over great ruins, at the destruction of our species, we are also soothed by the generous commiseration we feel in our own breasts, and therefore ruins give us the same kind of grateful melancholy we feel at a tragedy. Of all the objects of discord and confusion, no other is so shocking as the human soul in madness. When we see the principle of thought and beauty disordered, the horror is too high, like that of a massacre committed before our eyes, to suffer the mind to make any reflex act on the god-like traces of pity that distinguish our species; and we feel no sensations but those of dismay and terror.

Regular motion and life shewn in inanimate objects, give us also the secret pleasure we call beauty. Thus waves spent, and successively breaking upon the shore, and waving fields of corn and grass in con-

tinued motion, are ever beautiful. The beauty of colours may perhaps be arranged under this head: colours, like notes of music, affect the passions; red incites anger, black to melancholy; white brings a gentle joy to the mind; the softer colours refresh or relax it. The mixtures and gradations of colours have an effect correspondent to the transitions and combinations of sounds; but the strokes are too transient and feeble to become the objects of expression.

Beauty also results from every disposition of nature that plainly discovers her favour and indulgence to us. Thus the spring season, when the weather becomes mild, the verdant fields, trees loaded with fruit or covered with shade, clear springs, but particularly the human face, where the gentle passions are delineated, are beyond expression beautiful. On the same principle, inclement wintry skies, trees stripped of their verdure, desert barren lands, and, above all, death, are frightful and shocking. I must, however, observe, that I do not by any means suppose, that the sentiment of beauty arises from a reflex consideration of the mind, upon the observation of the designs of nature or of art; the sentiment of beauty is instantaneous, and depends upon no prior reflections. All I mean is, that design and beauty are in an arbitrary manner united together; so that where we see the one, whether we reflect on it or no, we perceive the other. I must further add, that there may be other divisions of beauty easily discoverable, which I have not taken notice of.

The general sense of beauty, as well as of grandeur, seems peculiar to man in the creation. The herd in common with him enjoy the gentle breath of spring; they lie down to repose on the flowery bank, and hear the peaceful humming of the bee; they enjoy the green fields and pastures; but we have reason to think, that it is man only who sees the image of beauty over the happy prospect, and rejoices at it; that it is hid from the brute creation, and depends not upon sense, but on the intelligent mind.

We have just taken a transient view of the principal departments of taste; let us now, madam, make a few general reflections upon our subject. *Usher.*

§ 228. *Sense, Taste, and Genius distinguished.*

The human genius, with the best assistance, and the finest examples, breaks forth but

but slowly; and the greatest men have but gradually acquired a just taste, and chaste simple conceptions of beauty. At an immature age, the sense of beauty is weak and confused, and requires an excess of colouring to catch its attention. It then prefers extravagance and rant to justness, a gross false wit to the engaging light of nature, and the shewy, rich, and glaring, to the fine and amiable. This is the childhood of taste; but as the human genius strengthens and grows to maturity, if it be assisted by a happy education, the sense of universal beauty awakes; it begins to be disgusted with the false and misshapen deceptions that pleased before, and rests with delight on elegant simplicity, on pictures of easy beauty and unaffected grandeur.

The progress of the fine arts in the human mind may be fixed at three remarkable degrees, from their foundation to the loftiest height. The basis is a sense of beauty and of the sublime, the second step we may call taste, and the last genius.

A sense of the beautiful and of the great is universal, which appears from the uniformity thereof in the most distant ages and nations. What was engaging and sublime in ancient Greece and Rome, are so at this day: and, as I observed before, there is not the least necessity of improvement or science, to discover the charms of a graceful or noble deportment. There is a fine, but an ineffectual light in the breast of man. After nightfall we have admired the planet Venus; the beauty and vivacity of her lustre, the immense distance from which we judged her beams issued, and the silence of the night, all concurred to strike us with an agreeable amazement. But she shone in distinguished beauty, without giving sufficient light to direct our steps, or shew us the objects around us. Thus in unimproved nature, the light of the mind is bright and useless. In utter barbarity, our prospect of it is still less fixed; it appears, and then again seems wholly to vanish in the savage breast, like the same planet Venus, when she has but just raised her orient beams to mariners above the waves, and is now descried, and now lost, through the swelling billows.

The next step is taste, the subject of our enquiry, which consists in a distinct, unconfused knowledge of the great and beautiful. Although you see not many possessed of a good taste, yet the generality of mankind are capable of it. The very populace of Athens had acquired a good

taste by habit and fine examples, so that a delicacy of judgment seemed natural to all who breathed the air of that elegant city: we find a manly and elevated sense distinguish the common people of Rome and of all the cities of Greece, while the level of mankind was preserved in those cities; while the Plebeians had a share in the government, and an utter separation was not made between them and the nobles, by wealth and luxury. But when once the common people are rent asunder wholly from the great and opulent, and made subservient to the luxury of the latter; then the taste of nature infallibly takes her flight from both parties. The poor by a sordid habit, and an attention wholly confined to mean views, and the rich by an attention to the changeable modes of fancy, and a vitiated preference for the rich and costly, lose view of simple beauty and grandeur. It may seem a paradox, and yet I am firmly persuaded, that it would be easier at this day to give a good taste to the young savages of America, than to the noble youth of Europe.

Genius, the pride of man, as man is of the creation, has been possessed but by few, even in the brightest ages. Men of superior genius, while they see the rest of mankind painfully struggling to comprehend obvious truths, glance themselves through the most remote consequences, like lightning through a path that cannot be traced. They see the beauties of nature with life and warmth, and paint them forcibly without effort, as the morning sun does the scenes he rises upon; and in several instances, communicate to objects a morning freshness and unaccountable lustre, that is not seen in the creation of nature. The poet, the statuary, the painter, have produced images that left nature far behind.

The constellations of extraordinary personages who appeared in Greece and Rome, at or near the same period of time, after ages of darkness to which we know no beginning; and the long barrenness of those countries after in great men, prove that genius owes much of its lustre to a personal contest of glory, and the strong rivalry of great examples within actual view and knowledge; and that great parts alone are not able to lift a person out of barbarity. It is further to be observed, that when the inspiring spirit of the fine arts retired, and left inanimate and cold breasts

breasts of poets, painters, and statuary, men of taste still remained, who distinguished and admired the beauteous monuments of genius; but the power of execution was lost; and although monarchs loved and courted the arts, yet they refused to return. From whence it is evident, that neither taste, nor natural parts, form the creating genius that inspired the great masters of antiquity, and that they owed their extraordinary powers to something different from both.

If we consider the numbers of men who wrote well, and excelled in every department of the liberal arts, in the ages of genius, and the simplicity that always attends beauty; we must be led to think, that although few perhaps can reach to the supreme beauty of imagination displayed by the first rate poets, orators, and philosophers; yet most men are capable of just thinking and agreeable writing. Nature lies very near our reflections, and will appear, if we be not misled and prejudiced before the sense of beauty grows to maturity. The populace of Athens and Rome prove strongly, that uncommon parts or great learning are not necessary to make men think justly.

Usher.

§ 229. *Thoughts on the Human Capacity.*

We know not the bounds of taste, because we are unacquainted with the extent and boundaries of the human genius. The mind in ignorance is like a sleeping giant; it has immense capacities without the power of using them. By listening to the lectures of Socrates, men grew heroes, philosophers, and legislators; for he of all mankind seemed to have discovered the short and lightsome path to the faculties of the mind. To give you an instance of the human capacity, that comes more immediately within your notice, what graces, what sentiments, have been transplanted into the motion of a minuet, of which a savage has no conception! We know not to what degree of rapture harmony is capable of being carried, nor what hidden powers may be in yet unexperienced beauties of the imagination, whose objects are in scenes and in worlds we are strangers to. Children, who die young, have no conception of the sentiment of personal beauty. Are we certain that we are not yet children in respect to several species of beauties? We are ignorant whether there be not passions in the soul, that have

hitherto remained unawaked and undiscovered for want of objects to rouse them; we feel plainly that some such are gently agitated and moved by certain notes of music. In reality, we know not but the taste and capacity of beauty and grandeur in the soul, may extend as far beyond all we actually perceive, as this whole world exceeds the sphere of a cockle or an oyster.

Ibid.

§ 230. *Taste how depraved and lost.*

Let us now consider by what means taste is usually depraved and lost in a nation, that is neither conquered by barbarians nor has lost the improvements in agriculture, husbandry, and defence, that allow men leisure for reflection and embellishment. I observed before that this natural light is not so clear in the greatest men, but it may lie oppressed by barbarity. When people of mean parts, and of pride without genius, get into elevated stations, they want a taste for simple grandeur, and mistake for it what is uncommonly glaring and extraordinary; whence proceeds false wit of every kind, a gaudy richness in dress, an oppressive load of ornament in building, and a grandeur overstrained and puerile universally. I must observe, that people of bad taste and little genius almost always lay a great stress on trivial matters, and are ostentatious and exact in singularities, or in a decorum in trifles. When people of mean parts appear in high stations, and at the head of the fashionable world, they cannot fail to introduce a false embroidered habit of mind: people of nearly the same genius, who make up the crowd, will admire and follow them; and at length solitary taste, adorned only by noble simplicity, will be lost in the general example.

Also when a nation is much corrupted; when avarice and a love of gain have seized upon the hearts of men; when the nobles ignominiously bend their necks to corruption and bribery, or enter into the base mysteries of gaming; then decency, elevated principles, and greatness of soul, expire; and all that remains is a comedy or puppet-show of elegance, in which the dancing-master and peer are upon a level, and the mind is understood to have no part in the drama of politeness, or else to act under a mean disguise of virtues which it is not possessed of.

Ibid.

§ 231. *Some Reflections on the Human Mind.*

Upon putting together the whole of our reflections, you see two different natures laying claim to the human race, and dragging it different ways. You see a necessity, that arises from our situation and circumstances, bending us down into unworthy misery and sordid baseness; and you see, when we can escape from the insulting tyranny of our fate, and acquire ease and freedom, a generous nature, that lay stupified and oppressed, begin to awake and charm us with prospects of beauty and glory. This awaking genius gazes in rapture at the beauteous and elevating scenes of nature. The beauties of nature are familiar, and charm it like a mother's bosom; and the objects which have the plain marks of immense power and grandeur, raise in it a still, an inquisitive, and trembling delight; but genius often throws over the objects of its conceptions colours finer than those of nature, and opens a paradise that exists no where but in its own creations. The bright and peaceful scenes of Arcadia, and the lovely descriptions of pastoral poetry, never existed on earth, no more than Pope's shepherds or the river gods of Windsor forest: it is all but a charming illusion, which the mind first paints with celestial colours and then languishes for. Knight-errantry is another kind of delusion, which, though it be fictitious in fact, yet is true in sentiment. I believe there are few people who in their youth, before they be corrupted by the commerce of the world, are not knight-errants and princesses in their hearts. The soul, in a beauteous ecstasy, communicates a flame to words which they had not; and poetry, by its quick transitions, bold figures, lively images, and the variety of efforts to paint the latent rapture, bears witness, that the confused ideas of the mind are still infinitely superior, and beyond the reach of all description. It is this divine spirit that, when roused from its lethargy, breathes in noble sentiments, that charms in elegance, that stamps upon marble or canvass the figures of gods and heroes, that inspires them with an air above humanity, and leads the soul through the enchanting meanders of music in a waking vision, through which it cannot break, to discover the near objects that charm it.

How shall we venture to trace the object of this surprizing beauty peculiar to

genius, which evidently does not come to the mind from the senses? It is not conveyed in sound, for we feel the sounds of music charm us by gently agitating and swelling the passions, and setting some passions afloat, for which we have no name, and knew not until they were awaked in the mind by harmony. This beauty does not arrive at the mind by the ideas of vision, though it be moved by them; for it evidently bestows on the mimic representations and images the mind makes of the objects of sense, an enchanting loveliness that never existed in those objects. Where shall the soul find this amazing beauty, whose very shadow, glimmering upon the imagination, opens unspeakable raptures in it, and distracts it with languishing pleasure? What are those stranger sentiments that lie in wait in the soul, until music calls them forth? What is the obscure but unavoidable value or merit of virtue? or who is the law-maker in the mind who gives it a worth and dignity beyond all estimation, and punishes the breach of it with conscious terror and despair? What is it, in objects of immeasurable power and grandeur, that we look for with still amazement and awful delight?—But I find, madam, we have been insensibly led into subjects too abstruse and severe; I must not put the graces with whom we have been conversing to flight, and draw the serious air of meditation over that countenance where the smiles naturally dwell.

I have, in consequence of your permission, put together such thoughts as occurred to me on good taste. I told you, if I had leisure hereafter, I would dispose of them with more regularity, and add any new observations that I may make. Before I finish, I must in justice make my acknowledgments of the assistance I received. I took notice, at the beginning, that Rollin's *Observations on Taste* gave occasion to this discourse. Sir Harry Beaumont's polished dialogue on beauty, called *Crito*, was of service to me; and I have availed myself of the writings and sentiments of the ancients, particularly of the poets and statuarys of Greece, which was the native and original country of the graces and fine arts. But I should be very unjust, if I did not make my chief acknowledgments where they are more peculiarly due. If your modesty will not suffer me to draw that picture from which I borrowed my ideas of elegance, I am bound

bound at least, in honesty, to disclaim every merit but that of copying from a bright original.

Usher.

§ 232. *General Reflections upon what is called Good Taste. From ROLLIN'S Belles Lettres.*

Taste as it now falls under our consideration, that is, with reference to the reading of authors and composition, is a clear, lively, and distinct discerning of all the beauty, truth, and justness of the thoughts and expressions, which compose a discourse. It distinguishes what is conformable to eloquence and propriety in every character, and suitable in different circumstances. And whilst, with a delicate, and exquisite sagacity, it notes the graces, turns, manners, and expressions, most likely to please; it perceives also all the defects which produce the contrary effect, and distinguishes precisely wherein those defects consist, and how far they are removed from the strict rules of art, and the real beauties of nature.

This happy faculty, which it is more easy to conceive than define, is less the effect of genius than judgment, and a kind of natural reason wrought up to perfection by study. It serves in composition to guide and direct the understanding. It makes use of the imagination, but without submitting to it, and keeps it always in subjection. It consults nature universally, follows it step by step, and is a faithful image of it. Reserved and sparing in the midst of abundance and riches, it dispenses the beauties and graces of discourse with temper and wisdom. It never suffers itself to be dazzled with the false, how glittering a figure soever it may make. 'Tis equally offended with too much and too little. It knows precisely where it must stop, and cuts off, without regret or mercy, whatever exceeds the beautiful and perfect. 'Tis the want of this quality which occasions the various species of bad style; as bombast, conceit, and witticism; in which as Quintilian says, the genius is void of judgment, and suffers itself to be carried away with an appearance of beauty, *quod ingenium judicio caret, & specie boni fallitur.*

Taste, simple and uniform in its principle, is varied and multiplied an infinite number of ways, yet so as under a thousand different forms, in prose or verse, in a declamatory or concise, sublime or simple, jocular or serious style, 'tis always the

same, and carries with it a certain character of the true and natural, immediately perceived by all persons of judgment. We cannot say the style of Terence, Phædrus, Sallust, Cæsar, Tully, Livy, Virgil, and Horace, is the same. And yet they have all, if I may be allowed the expression, a certain tincture of a common spirit, which in that diversity of genius and style makes an affinity between them, and a sensible difference also betwixt them and the other writers, who have not the stamp of the best age of antiquity upon them.

I have already said, that this distinguishing faculty was a kind of natural reason wrought up to perfection by study. In reality all men bring the first principles of taste with them into the world, as well as those of rhetoric and logic. As a proof of this, we may urge, that every good orator is almost always infallibly approved of by the people, and that there is no difference of taste and sentiment upon this point, as Tully observes, between the ignorant and the learned.

The case is the same with music and painting. A concert, that has all its parts well composed and well executed, both as to instruments and voices, pleases universally. But if any discord arises, any ill tone of voice be intermixed, it shall displease even those who are absolutely ignorant of music. They know not what it is that offends them, but they find somewhat grating in it to their ears. And this proceeds from the taste and sense of harmony implanted in them by nature. In like manner a fine picture charms and transports a spectator, who has no idea of painting. Ask him what pleases him, and why it pleases him, and he cannot easily give an account, or specify the real reasons; but natural sentiment works almost the same effect in him as art and use in connoisseurs.

The like observations will hold good as to the taste we are here speaking of. Most men have the first principles of it in themselves, though in the greater part of them they lie dormant in a manner, for want of instruction or reflection; as they are often stifled or corrupted by a vicious education, bad customs, or reigning prejudices of the age and country.

But how depraved soever the taste may be, it is never absolutely lost. There are certain fixed remains of it, deeply rooted in the understanding, wherein all men agree. Where these secret seeds are cultivated

tivated with care, they may be carried to a far greater height of perfection. And if it so happens that any fresh light awakens these first notions, and renders the mind attentive to the immutable rules of truth and beauty, so as to discover the natural and necessary consequences of them, and serves at the same time for a model to facilitate the application of them; we generally see, that men of the best sense gladly cast off their ancient errors, correct the mistakes of their former judgments, and return to the justness, and delicacy, which are the effects of a refined taste, and by degrees draw others after them into the same way of thinking.

To be convinced of this, we need only look upon the success of certain great orators and celebrated authors, who, by their natural talents, have recalled these primitive ideas, and given fresh life to these seeds, which lie concealed in the mind of every man. In a little time they united the voices of those who made the best use of their reason, in their favour; and soon after gained the applause of every age and condition, both ignorant and learned. It would be easy to point out amongst us the date of the good taste, which now reigns in all arts and sciences; by tracing each up to its original, we should see that a small number of men of genius have acquired the nation this glory and advantage.

Even those, who live in the politer ages without any application to learning or study, do not fail to gain some tincture of the prevailing good taste, which has a share without their perceiving it themselves, in their conversation, letters, and behaviour. There are few of our soldiers at present, who would not write more correctly and elegantly than Ville-Hardouin, and the other officers who lived in a ruder and more barbarous age.

From what I have said, we may conclude, that rules and precepts may be laid down for the improvement of this discerning faculty; and I cannot perceive why Quintilian, who justly sets such a value upon it, should say that it is no more to be obtained by art, than the taste or smell; *Non magis arte traditur, quam gustus aut odor*; unless he meant, that some persons are so stupid, and have so little use of their judgment, as might tempt one to believe that it was in reality the gift of nature alone.

Neither do I think that Quintilian is absolutely in the right in the instance he

produces at least with respect to taste. We need only imagine what passes in certain nations, in which long custom has introduced a fondness for certain odd and extravagant dishes. They readily commend good liquors, elegant food, and good cookery. They soon learn to discern the delicacy of the seasoning, when a skilful master in that way has pointed it out to them, and to prefer it to the grossness of their former diet. When I talk thus, I would not be understood to think those nations had great cause to complain, for the want of knowledge and ability in what is become so fatal to us. But we may judge from hence the resemblance there is between the taste of the body and mind, and how proper the first is to describe the characters of the second.

The good taste we speak of, which is that of literature, is not limited to what we call the sciences, but extends itself imperceptibly to other arts, such as architecture, painting, sculpture, and music. 'Tis the same discerning faculty which introduces universally the same elegance, the same symmetry, and the same order in the disposition of the parts; which inclines us to a noble simplicity, to natural beauties, and a judicious choice of ornaments. On the other hand, the depravation of taste in arts has been always a mark and consequence of the deprivation of taste in literature. The heavy, confused, and gross ornaments of the old Gothic buildings, placed usually without elegance, contrary to all good rules, and out of all true proportions, were the image of the writings of the authors of the same age.

The good taste of literature reaches also to public customs and the manner of living. An habit of consulting the best rules upon one subject, naturally leads to the doing it also upon others. Paulus Æmiilius, whose genius was so universally extensive, having made a great feast for the entertainment of all Greece upon the conquest of Macedon, and observing that his guests looked upon it as conducted with more elegance and art than might be expected from a soldier, told them they were much in the wrong to be surprised at it; for the same genius, which taught how to draw up an army to advantage, naturally pointed out the proper disposition of a table.

But by a strange, though frequent revolution, which is one great proof of the weakness,

weakness, or rather the corruption of human understanding, this very delicacy and elegance, which the good taste of literature and eloquence usually introduces into common life, for buildings, for instance, and entertainments, coming by little and little to degenerate into excess and luxury, introduces in its turn the bad taste in literature and eloquence. This Seneca informs us, in a very ingenious manner, in one of his epistles, where he seems to have drawn a good description of himself, though he did not perceive it.

One of his friends had asked him, whence the alteration could possibly arise which was sometimes observable in eloquence, and which carried most people into certain general faults; such as the affectation of bold and extravagant figures, metaphors struck off without measure or caution, sentences so short and abrupt, that they left people rather to guess what they meant, than conveyed a meaning.

Seneca answers this question by a common proverb among the Greeks; "As is their life, so is their discourse," *Talis hominibus fuit oratio, qualis vita*. As a private person lets us into his character by his discourse, so the reigning style is oft an image of the public manners. The heart carries the understanding away with it, and communicates its vices to it, as well as its virtues. When men strive to be distinguished from the rest of the world by novelty, and refinement in their furniture, buildings, and entertainments, and a studious search after every thing that is not in common use; the same taste will prevail in eloquence, and introduce novelty and irregularity there. When the mind is once accustomed to despise rules in manners, it will not follow them in style. Nothing will then go down but what strikes by its being new and glaring, extraordinary and affected. Trifling and childish thoughts will take place of such as are bold and overstrained to an excess. We shall affect a sleek and florid style, and an elocution pompous indeed, but with little more than mere sound in it.

And this sort of faults is generally the effect of a single man's example, who, having gained reputation enough to be followed by the multitude, sets up for a master, and gives the strain to others. 'Tis thought honourable to imitate him, to observe and copy after him, and his style becomes the rule and model of the public taste.

As then luxury in diet and dress is a plain indication that the manners are not under so good a regulation as they should be; so a licentiousness of style, when it becomes public and general, shews evidently a depravation and corruption of the understandings of mankind,

To remedy this evil, and reform the thoughts and expressions used in style, it will be requisite to cleanse the spring from whence they proceed. 'Tis the mind that must be cured. When that is found and vigorous, eloquence will be so too; but it becomes feeble and languid when the mind is enfeebled and enervated by pleasures and delights. In a word, it is the mind which presides, and directs, and gives motion to the whole, and all the rest follows its impressions.

He has observed elsewhere, that a style too studied and far-fetched is a mark of a little genius. He would have an orator, especially when upon a grave and serious subject, be less curious about words, and the manner of placing them, than of his matter, and the choice of his thoughts. When you see a discourse laboured and polished with so much carefulness and study, you may conclude, says he, that it comes from a mean capacity, that busies itself in trifles. A writer of great genius will not stand for such minute things. He thinks and speaks with more nobleness and grandeur, and we may discern, in all he says, a certain easy and natural air, which argues a man of real riches, who does not endeavour to appear so. He then compares this florid prinked eloquence to young people curled out and powdered, and continually before their glass and the toilet: *Barba et coma nitidos, de capsula totos*. Nothing great and solid can be expected from such characters. So also with orators. The discourse is in a manner the visage of the mind. If it is decked out, tricked up, and painted, it is a sign there is some defect in the mind, and all is not found within. So much finery, displayed with such art and study, is not the proper ornament of eloquence, *Non est ornamentum virile, concinnitas*.

Who would not think, upon hearing Seneca talk thus, that he was a declared enemy of bad taste, and that no one was more capable of opposing and preventing it than he? And yet it was he, more than any other, that contributed to the depravation of taste, and corruption of eloquence. I shall take an occasion to speak upon this subject in another place, and shall do it the

the more freely, as there is cause to fear lest the bad taste for bright thoughts, and turns of expression, which is properly the character of Seneca, should prevail in our own age. And I question whether this be not a mark and presage of the ruin of eloquence we are threatened with, as the immoderate luxury that now reigns more than ever, and the almost general decay of good manners, are perhaps also the fatal harbingers of it.

One single person of reputation sometimes, as Seneca observes, and he himself is an instance of it, who by his eminent qualifications shall have acquired the esteem of the public, may suffice to introduce this bad taste, and corrupt style. Whilst moved by a secret ambition, a man of this character strives to distinguish himself from the rest of the orators and writers of his age, and to open a new path, where he thinks it better to march alone at the head of his new disciples, than follow at the heels of the old masters; whilst he prefers the reputation of wit to that of solidity, pursues what is bright rather than what is solid, and sets the marvellous above the natural and true; whilst he chuses rather to apply to the fancy than to the judgment, to dazzle reason than convince it, to surprise the hearer into an approbation, rather than deserve it; and by a kind of delusion and soft enchantment carry off the admiration and applauses of superficial minds (and such the multitude always are); other writers, seduced by the charms of novelty, and the hopes of a like success, will suffer themselves insensibly to be hurried down the stream, and add strength to it by following it. And thus the old taste, though better in itself, shall give way to the new one without redress, which shall presently assume the force of law, and draw a whole nation after it.

This should awaken the diligence of the masters in the university, to prevent and hinder, as much as in them lies, the ruin of good taste; and as they are entrusted with the public instruction of youth, they should look upon this care as an essential part of their duty. The custom, manners, and laws of the ancients have changed; they are often opposite to our way of life, and the usages that prevail amongst us; and the knowledge of them may be therefore less necessary for us. Their actions are gone and cannot return; great events have had their course, without any rea-

son left for us to expect the like; and the revolutions of states and empires have perhaps very little relation to their present situation and wants; and therefore become of less concern to us. But good taste, which is grounded upon immutable principles; is always the same in every age; and it is the principal advantage that young persons should be taught to obtain from reading of ancient authors, who have ever been looked upon with reason as the masters, depositories, and guardians of sound eloquence and good taste. In fine, of all that may anywise contribute to the cultivating the mind, we may truly say this is the most essential part, and what ought to be preferred before all others.

This good taste is not confined to literature; it takes in also, as we have already suggested, all arts and sciences, and branches of knowledge. It consists therefore in a certain just and exact discernment; which points out to us, in each of the sciences and branches of knowledge, whatever is most curious, beautiful, and useful, whatever is most essential, suitable, or necessary to those who apply to it; how far consequently we should carry the study of it; what ought to be removed from it; what deserves a particular application and preference before the rest. For want of this discernment, a man may fall short of the most essential part of his profession, without perceiving it: nor is the case so rare as one might imagine. An instance taken from the *Cyropædia* of Xenophon will set the matter in a clear light.

The young Cyrus, son of Cambyfes King of Persia, had long been under the tuition of a master in the art of war, who was without doubt a person of the greatest abilities and best reputation in his time. One day, as Cambyfes was discoursing with his son, he took occasion to mention his master, whom the young Prince had in great veneration, and from whom he pretended he had learnt in general whatever was necessary for the command of an army. Has your master, says Cambyfes, given you any lectures of oeconomy; that is, has he taught you how to provide your troops with necessaries, to supply them with provisions, to prevent the distempers that are incident to them, to cure them when they are sick, to strengthen their bodies by frequent exercise, to raise emulation amongst them, how to make yourself obeyed, esteemed, and beloved by them? Upon

all these points, answered Cyrus, and several others the King ran over to him, he has not spoke one word, and they are all new to me. And what has he taught you then? To exercise my arms, replies the young Prince, to ride, to draw the bow, to cast a spear, to form a camp, to draw the plan of a fortification, to range my troops in order of battle, to make a review, to see that they march, file off, and encamp. Cambyfes smiled, and let his son see, that he had learnt nothing of what was most essential to the making of a good officer, and an able general; and taught him far more in one conversation, which certainly deserves well to be studied by young gentlemen that are designed for the army, than his famous master had done in many years.

Every profession is liable to the same inconvenience, either from our not being sufficiently attentive to the principal end we should have in view in our applications to it, or from taking custom for our guide, and blindly following the footsteps of others, who have gone before us. There is nothing more useful than the knowledge of history. But if we rest satisfied in loading our memory with a multitude of facts of no great curiosity or importance, if we dwell only upon dates and difficulties in chronology or geography, and take no pains to get acquainted with the genius, manners, and characters of the great men we read of, we shall have learnt a great deal, and know but very little. A treatise of rhetoric may be extensive, enter into a long detail of precept, define very exactly every trope and figure, explain well their differences, and largely treat such questions as were warmly debated by the rhetoricians of old; and with all this be very like that discourse of rhetoric Tully speaks of, which was only fit to teach people not to speak at all, or not to the purpose. *Scriptis artem rhetoricam Cleanthes, sed sic, ut, si quis obmutescere concupierit, nihil aliud legere debeat.* In philosophy one might spend abundance of time in knotty and abstruse disputes, and even learn a great many fine and curious things, and at the same time neglect the essential part of the study, which is to form the judgment and direct the manners.

In a word, the most necessary qualification, not only in the art of speaking and the sciences, but in the whole conduct of our life, is that taste, prudence, and discretion, which upon all subjects and on every

occasion teaches us what we should do, and how to do it. *Illud dicere satis habeo, nihil esse, non modo in orando, sed in omni vita, prius consilio.* Rollin.

§ 233. DR. JOHNSON'S Preface to his Edition of SHAKESPEARE.

That praises are without reason lavished on the dead, and that the honours due only to excellence are paid to antiquity, is a complaint likely to be always continued by those, who, being able to add nothing to truth, hope for eminence from the heresies of paradox; or those, who, being forced by disappointment upon consolatory expedients, are willing to hope from posterity what the present age refuses, and flatter themselves that the regard, which is yet denied by envy, will be at last bestowed by time.

Antiquity, like every other quality that attracts the notice of mankind, has undoubtedly votaries that reverence it, not from reason, but from prejudice. Some seem to admire indiscriminately whatever has been long preserved, without considering that time has sometimes co-operated with chance; all perhaps are more willing to honour past than present excellence; and the mind contemplates genius through the shade of age, as the eye surveys the sun through artificial opacity. The great contention of criticism is to find the faults of the moderns, and the beauties of the ancients. While an author is yet living, we estimate his powers by his worst performance; and when he is dead, we rate them by his best.

To works, however, of which the excellence is not absolute and definite, but gradual and comparative; to works not raised upon principles demonstrative and scientific, but appealing wholly to observation and experience, no other test can be applied than length of duration and concurrence of esteem. What mankind have long possessed they have often examined and compared; and if they persist to value the possession, it is because frequent comparisons have confirmed opinion in its favour. As among the works of nature no man can properly call a river deep, or a mountain high, without the knowledge of many mountains, and many rivers; so, in the productions of genius, nothing can be styled excellent till it has been compared with other works of the same kind. Demonstration immediately displays its power, and has nothing to hope or fear from

from the flux of years; but works tentative and experimental must be estimated by their proportion to the general and collective ability of man, as it is discovered in a long succession of endeavours. Of the first building that was raised, it might be with certainty determined, that it was round or square; but whether it was spacious or lofty must have been referred to time. The Pythagorean scale of numbers was at once discovered to be perfect: but the poems of Homer we yet know not to transcend the common limits of human intelligence, but by remarking, that nation after nation, and century after century, has been able to do little more than transpose his incidents, new name his characters, and paraphrase his sentiments.

The reverence due to writings that have long subsisted, arises, therefore, not from any credulous confidence in the superior wisdom of past ages, or gloomy persuasion of the degeneracy of mankind, but is the consequence of acknowledged and indubitable positions, that what has been longest known has been most considered, and what is most considered is best understood.

The poet, of whose works I have undertaken the revision, may now begin to assume the dignity of an ancient, and claim the privilege of established fame and prescriptive veneration. He has long outlived his century, the term commonly fixed as the test of literary merit. Whatever advantages he might once derive from personal allusion, local customs, or temporary opinions, have for many years been lost; and every topic of merriment, or motive of sorrow, which the modes of artificial life afforded him, now only obscure the scenes which they once illuminated. The effects of favour and competition are at an end; the tradition of his friendships and his enemies has perished; his works support no opinion with arguments, nor supply any faction with invectives; they can neither indulge vanity, nor gratify malignity; but are read without any other reason than the desire of pleasure, and are therefore praised only as pleasure is obtained: yet, thus unassisted by interest or passions they have past through variations of taste and change of manners, and, as they devolved from one generation to another, have received new honours at every transmission.

But because human judgment, though it be gradually gaining upon certainty, never becomes infallible; and approbation, though long continued, may yet be only

the approbation of prejudice or fashion; it is proper to enquire, by what peculiarities of excellence Shakespeare has gained and kept the favour of his countrymen.

Nothing can please many and please long, but just representations of general nature. Particular manners can be known to few, and therefore few only can judge how nearly they are copied. The irregular combinations of fanciful invention may delight awhile, by that novelty of which the common satiety of life sends us all in quest; but the pleasures of sudden wonder are soon exhausted, and the mind can only repose on the stability of truth.

Shakespeare is, above all writers, at least above all modern writers, the poet of nature; the poet that holds up to his readers a faithful mirror of manners and of life. His characters are not modified by the customs of particular places, unpractised by the rest of the world; by the peculiarities of studies or professions, which can operate but upon small numbers; or by the accidents of transient fashions or temporary opinions; they are the genuine progeny of common humanity, such as the world will always supply, and observation will always find. His persons act and speak by the influence of those general passions and principles by which all minds are agitated, and the whole system of life is continued in motion. In the writings of other poets, a character is too often an individual; in those of Shakespeare, it is commonly a species.

It is from this wide extension of design that so much instruction is derived. It is this which fills the plays of Shakespeare with practical axioms and domestic wisdom. It was said of Euripides, that every verse was a precept; and it may be said of Shakespeare, that from his works may be collected a system of civil and economical prudence. Yet his real power is not shewn in the splendor of particular passages, but by the progress of his fable, and the tenor of his dialogue; and he that tries to recommend him by select quotations, will succeed like the pedant in Hierocles, who, when he offered his house to sale, carried a brick in his pocket as a specimen.

It will not easily be imagined how much Shakespeare excels in accommodating his sentiments to real life, but by comparing him with other authors. It was observed of the ancient schools of declamation, that the more diligently they were frequented, the more was the student disqualified for the world, because he found nothing there

which he should ever meet in any other place. The same remark may be applied to every stage but that of Shakespeare. The theatre, when it is under any other direction, is peopled by such characters as were never seen, conversing in a language which was never heard, upon topics which will never arise in the commerce of mankind. But the dialogue of this author is often so evidently determined by the incident which produces it, and is pursued with so much ease and simplicity, that it seems scarcely to claim the merit of fiction, but to have been gleaned by diligent selection out of common conversation and common occurrences.

Upon every other stage the universal agent is love, by whose power all good and evil is distributed, and every action quickened or retarded. To bring a lover, a lady, and a rival into the fable; to entangle them in contradictory obligations, perplex them with oppositions of interest, and harass them with violence of desires inconsistent with each other; to make them meet in rapture, and part in agony; to fill their mouths with hyperbolic joy and outrageous sorrow; to distress them as nothing human ever was distressed; to deliver them as nothing human ever was delivered; is the business of a modern dramatist. For this, probability is violated, life is misrepresented, and language is depraved. But love is only one of many passions; and as it has no greater influence upon the sum of life, it has little operation in the dramas of a poet, who caught his ideas from the living world, and exhibited only what he saw before him. He knew that any other passion, as it was regular or exorbitant, was a cause of happiness or calamity.

Characters, thus ample and general, were not easily discriminated and preserved; yet perhaps no poet ever kept his personages more distinct from each other. I will not say with Pope, that every speech may be assigned to the proper speaker, because many speeches there are which have nothing characteristic; but, perhaps, though some may be equally adapted to every person, it will be difficult to find any that can be properly transferred from the present possessor to another claimant. The choice is right, when there is reason for choice.

Other dramatists can only gain attention by hyperbolic or aggravated characters, by fabulous and unexampled excellence or depravity, as the writers of barbarous ro-

mances invigorated the reader by a giant and a dwarf; and he that should form his expectations of human affairs from the play, or from the tale, would be equally deceived. Shakespeare has no heroes; his scenes are occupied only by men, who act and speak as the reader thinks that he should himself have spoken or acted on the same occasion: even where the agency is supernatural, the dialogue is level with life. Other writers disguise the most natural passions and most frequent incidents; so that he who contemplates them in the book will not know them in the world: Shakespeare approximates the remote, and familiarizes the wonderful; the event which he represents will not happen; but, if it were possible, its effects would probably be such as he has assigned; and it may be said, that he has not only shewn human nature as it acts in real exigencies, but as it would be found in trials, to which it cannot be exposed.

This therefore is the praise of Shakespeare, that his drama is the mirror of life; that he who has mazed his imagination, in following the phantoms which other writers raise up before him, may here be cured of his delirious ecstasies, by reading human sentiments in human language, by scenes from which a hermit may estimate the transactions of the world, and a confessor predict the progress of the passions.

His adherence to general nature has exposed him to the censure of critics, who form their judgments upon narrower principles. Dennis and Rymer think his Romans not sufficiently Roman; and Voltaire censures his kings as not completely royal. Dennis is offended; that Menenius, a senator of Rome, should play the buffoon; and Voltaire perhaps thinks decency violated when the Danish usurper is represented as a drunkard. But Shakespeare always makes nature predominate over accident; and if he preserves the essential character, is not very careful of distinctions superinduced and adventitious. His story requires Romans or Kings, but he thinks only on men. He knew that Rome, like every other city, had men of all dispositions; and wanting a buffoon, he went into the senate-house for that which the senate-house would certainly have afforded him. He was inclined to shew an usurper and a murderer not only odious, but despicable; he therefore added drunkenness to his other qualities, knowing that kings love wine like

like other men, and that wine exerts its natural power upon kings. These are the petty cavils of petty minds; a poet overlooks the casual distinction of country and condition, as a painter, satisfied with the figure, neglects the drapery.

The censure which he has incurred by mixing comic and tragic scenes, as it extends to all his works, deserves more consideration. Let the fact be first stated, and then examined.

Shakespeare's plays are not, in the rigorous and critical sense, either tragedies or comedies, but compositions of a distinct kind; exhibiting the real state of sublunary nature, which partakes of good and evil, joy and sorrow, mingled with endless variety of proportion, and innumerable modes of combination; and expressing the course of the world, in which the loss of one is the gain of another; in which, at the same time, the reveller is hastening to his wine, and the mourner burying his friend: in which the malignity of one is sometimes defeated by the frolic of another; and many mischiefs and many benefits are done and hindered without design.

Out of this chaos of mingled purposes and casualties, the ancient poets, according to the laws which custom had prescribed, selected some the crimes of men, and some their absurdities; some the momentous vicissitudes of life, and some the lighter occurrences; some the terrors of distress, and some the gaieties of prosperity. Thus rose the two modes of imitation, known by the names of *tragedy* and *comedy*, compositions intended to promote different ends by contrary means, and considered as so little allied, that I do not recollect, among the Greeks or Romans, a single writer who attempted both.

Shakespeare has united the powers of exciting laughter and sorrow, not only in one mind, but in one composition. Almost all his plays are divided between serious and ludicrous characters; and in the successive evolutions of the design, sometimes produce seriousness and sorrow, and sometimes levity and laughter.

That this is a practice contrary to the rules of criticism will be readily allowed; but there is always an appeal open from criticism to nature. The end of writing is to instruct; the end of poetry is to instruct by pleasing. That the mingled drama may convey all the instruction of tragedy or comedy cannot be denied, because it includes both in its alterations of exhibition,

and approaches nearer than either to the appearance of life, by shewing how great machinations and slender designs may promote or obviate one another, and the high and the low co-operate in the general system by unavoidable concatenation.

It is objected, that by this change of scenes the passions are interrupted in their progression, and that the principal event, being not advanced by a due gradation of preparatory incidents, wants at last the power to move, which constitutes the perfection of dramatic poetry. This reasoning is so specious, that it is received as true even by those who in daily experience feel it to be false. The interchanges of mingled scenes seldom fail to produce the intended vicissitudes of passion. Fiction cannot move so much, but that the attention may be easily transferred; and though it must be allowed that pleasing melancholy be sometimes interrupted by unwelcome levity, yet let it be considered likewise, that melancholy is often not pleasing, and that the disturbance of one man may be the relief of another; that different auditors have different habitudes; and that, upon the whole, all pleasure consists in variety.

The players, who in their edition divided our author's works into comedies, histories, and tragedies, seem not to have distinguished the three kinds by any very exact or definite ideas.

An action which ended happily to the principal persons, however serious or distressful through its intermediate incidents, in their opinion constituted a comedy. This idea of a comedy continued long amongst us; and plays were written, which, by changing the catastrophe, were tragedies to-day, and comedies to-morrow.

Tragedy was not in those times a poem of more general dignity or elevation than comedy; it required only a calamitous conclusion, with which the common criticism of that age was satisfied, whatever lighter pleasure it afforded in its progress.

History was a series of actions, with no other than chronological succession, independent of each other, and without any tendency to introduce or regulate the conclusion. It is not always very nicely distinguished from tragedy. There is not much nearer approach to unity of action in the tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra, than in the history of Richard the Second. But a history might be continued

through many plays; as it had no plan, it had no limits.

Through all these denominations of the drama, Shakespeare's mode of composition is the same; an interchange of seriousness and merriment, by which the mind is softened at one time, and exhilarated at another. But whatever be his purpose, whether to gladden or depress, or to conduct the story, without vehemence or emotion, through tracts of easy and familiar dialogue, he never fails to attain his purpose; as he commands us, we laugh or mourn, or sit silent with quiet expectation, in tranquillity without indifference.

When Shakespeare's plan is understood, most of the criticisms of Rymer and Voltaire vanish away. The play of Hamlet is opened, without impropriety, by two sentinels. Iago bellows at Brabantio's window, without injury to the scheme of the play, though in terms which a modern audience would not easily endure; the character of Polonius is seasonable and useful; and the Grave-diggers themselves may be heard with applause.

Shakespeare engaged in dramatic poetry with the world open before him; the rules of the ancients were yet known to few; the public judgment was unformed: he had no example of such fame as might force him upon imitation, nor critics of such authority as might restrain his extravagance; he therefore indulged his natural disposition; and his disposition, as Rymer has remarked, led him to comedy. In tragedy he often writes, with great appearance of toil and study, what is written at last with little felicity; but in his comic scenes, he seems to produce, without labour, what no labour can improve. In tragedy he is always struggling after some occasion to be comic; but in comedy he seems to repose, or to luxuriate, as in a mode of thinking congenial to his nature. In his tragic scenes there is always something wanting; but his comedy often surpasses expectation or desire. His comedy pleases by the thoughts and the language, and his tragedy, for the greater part, by incident and action. His tragedy seems to be skill, his comedy to be instinct.

The force of his comic scenes has suffered little diminution, from the changes made by a century and a half, in manners or in words. As his personages act upon principles arising from genuine passion, very little modified by particular forms, their pleasures and vexations are communicable to all times and to all places; they are na-

tural, and therefore durable: the adventitious peculiarities of personal habits are only superficial dyes, bright and pleasing for a little while, yet soon fading to a dim tinct, without any remains of former lustre; but the discriminations of true passion are the colours of nature: they pervade the whole mass, and can only perish with the body that exhibits them. The accidental compositions of heterogeneous modes are dissolved by the chance which combined them; but the uniform simplicity of primitive qualities neither admits increase, nor suffers decay. The sand heaped by one flood is scattered by another, but the rock always continues in its place. The stream of time, which is continually washing the dissoluble fabrics of other poets, passes without injury to the adamant of Shakespeare.

If there be, what I believe there is, in every nation, a style which never becomes obsolete, a certain mode of phraseology so consonant and congenial to the analogy and principles of its respective language, as to remain settled and unaltered; this style is probably to be sought in the common intercourse of life, among those who speak only to be understood, without ambition of elegance. The polite are always catching modish innovations, and the learned depart from established forms of speech, in hopes of finding or making better; those who wish for distinction forsake the vulgar, when the vulgar is right; but there is a conversation above grossness, and below refinement, where propriety resides, and where this poet seems to have gathered his comic dialogue. He is therefore more agreeable to the ears of the present age than any other author equally remote, and among his other excellencies deserves to be studied as one of the original masters of our language.

These observations are to be considered not as unexceptionably constant, but as containing general and predominant truth. Shakespeare's familiar dialogue is affirmed to be smooth and clear, yet not wholly without ruggedness or difficulty; as a country may be eminently fruitful, though it has spots unfit for cultivation: his characters are praised as natural, though their sentiments are sometimes forced, and their actions improbable; as the earth upon the whole is spherical, though its surface is varied with protuberances and cavities.

Shakespeare with his excellencies has likewise faults, and faults sufficient to obscure

secure and overwhelm any other merit. I shall shew them in the proportion in which they appear to me, without envious malignity or superstitious veneration. No question can be more innocently discussed than a dead poet's pretensions to renown; and little regard is due to that bigotry which sets candour higher than truth.

His first defect is that to which may be imputed most of the evil in books or in men. He sacrifices virtue to convenience, and is so much more careful to please than to instruct, that he seems to write without any moral purpose. From his writings, indeed, a system of social duty may be selected, for he that thinks reasonably must think morally; but his precepts and axioms drop casually from him; he makes no just distribution of good or evil, nor is always careful to shew in the virtuous a disapprobation of the wicked; he carries his persons indifferently through right and wrong, and at the close dismisses them without further care, and leaves their examples to operate by chance. This fault the barbarity of his age cannot extenuate; for it is always a writer's duty to make the world better, and justice is a virtue independent on time or place.

The plots are often so loosely formed, that a very slight consideration may improve them, and so carelessly pursued, that he seems not always fully to comprehend his own design. He omits opportunities of instructing or delighting, which the train of his story seems to force upon him, and apparently rejects those exhibitions which would be more affecting, for the sake of those which are more easy.

It may be observed, that in many of his plays the latter part is evidently neglected. When he found himself near the end of his work, and in view of his reward, he shortened the labour to snatch the profit. He therefore remits his efforts where he should most vigorously exert them, and his catastrophe is improbably produced or imperfectly represented.

He had no regard to distinction of time or place, but gives to one age or nation, without scruple, the customs, institutions, and opinions of another, at the expence not only of likelihood, but of possibility. These faults Pope has endeavoured, with more zeal than judgment to transfer to his imagined interpolators. We need not wonder to find Heſtor quoting Aristotle, when we see the loves of Theſeus and Hippolyta combined with the Gothic mythology of

fairies. Shakespeare, indeed, was not the only violator of chronology; for, in the same age, Sydney, who wanted not the advantages of learning, has, in his *Arcadia*, confounded the pastoral with the feudal times, the days of innocence, quiet, and security, with those of turbulence, violence, and adventure.

In his comic scenes he is seldom very successful, when he engages his characters in reciprocations of smartness and contests of sarcasm; their jests are commonly gross, and their pleasantry licentious; neither his gentlemen nor his ladies have much delicacy, nor are sufficiently distinguished from his clowns by any appearance of refined manners. Whether he represented the real conversation of his time is not easy to determine; the reign of Elizabeth is commonly supposed to have been a time of stateliness, formality, and reserve; yet, perhaps the relaxations of that severity were not very elegant. There must, however, have been always some modes of gaiety preferable to others, and a writer ought to choose the best.

In tragedy, his performance seems constantly to be worse, as his labour is more. The effusions of passion, which exigence forces out, are for the most part striking and energetic; but whenever he solicits his invention or strains his faculties, the offspring of his throes is tumour, meanness, tediousness, and obscurity.

In narration, he affects a disproportionate pomp of diction, and a wearisome train of circumlocution, and tells the incident imperfectly in many words, which might have been more plainly delivered in few. Narration in dramatic poetry is naturally tedious, as it is unanimated and inactive, and obstructs the progress of the action; it should therefore always be rapid, and enlivened by frequent interruption. Shakespeare found it an incumbrance, and instead of lightening it by brevity, endeavoured to recommend it by dignity and splendor.

His declamations, or set speeches, are commonly cold and weak, for his power was the power of nature; when he endeavoured, like other tragic writers, to catch opportunities of amplification, and, instead of inquiring what the occasion demanded, to shew how much his stores of knowledge could supply, he seldom escapes without the pity or resentment of his reader.

It is incident to him to be now and then entangled with an unwieldy sentiment, which he cannot well express, and will not reject;

he struggles with it a while, and, if it continues stubborn, comprizes it in words such as occur, and leaves it to be disentangled and envolved by those who have more leisure to bestow upon it.

Not that always where the language is intricate the thought is subtle, or the image always great where the line is bulky; the quality of words to things is very often neglected; and trivial sentiments and vulgar ideas disappoint the attention, to which they are recommended by sonorous epithets and swelling figures.

But the admirers of this great poet have most reason to complain when he approaches nearest to his highest excellence, and seems fully resolved to sink them in dejection, and mollify them with tender emotions by the fall of greatness, the danger of innocence, or the crosses of love. What he does best, he soon ceases to do. He is not long soft and pathetic without some idle conceit, or contemptible equivocation. He no sooner begins to move, than he counteracts himself; and terror and pity, as they are rising in the mind, are checked and blasted by sudden frigidity.

A quibble is to Shakespeare what luminous vapours are to the traveller; he follows it at all adventures; it is sure to lead him out of his way, and sure to engulf him in the mire. It has some malignant power over his mind, and its fascinations are irresistible. Whatever be the dignity or profundity of his disquisition, whether he be enlarging knowledge, or exalting affection, whether he be amusing attention with incidents, or enchainning it in suspense, let but a quibble spring up before him, and he leaves his work unfinished. A quibble is the golden apple for which he will always turn aside from his career, or stoop from his elevation. A quibble, poor and barren as it is, gave him such delight, that he was content to purchase it, by the sacrifice of reason, propriety, and truth. A quibble was to him the fatal Cleopatra for which he lost the world, and was content to lose it.

It will be thought strange, that, in enumerating the defects of this writer, I have not yet mentioned his neglect of the unities; his violation of those laws which have been instituted and established by the joint authority of poets and critics.

For his other deviations from the art of writing, I resign him to critical justice, without making any other demand in his favour, than that which must be indulged

to all human excellence; that his virtues be rated with his failings: but, from the censure which this irregularity may bring upon him, I shall, with due reverence to that learning which I must oppose, adventure to try how I can defend him.

His histories, being neither tragedies nor comedies, are not subject to any of their laws; nothing more is necessary to all the praise which they expect, than that the changes of action be so prepared as to be understood, that the incidents be various and affecting, and the characters consistent, natural, and distinct. No other unity is intended, and therefore none is to be sought.

In his other works he has well enough preserved the unity of action. He has not, indeed, an intrigue regularly perplexed and regularly unravelled; he does not endeavour to hide his design only to discover it; for this is seldom the order of real events, and Shakespeare is the poet of nature: but his plan has commonly what Aristotle requires, a beginning, a middle, and an end; one event is concatenated with another, and the conclusion follows by easy consequence. There are perhaps some incidents that might be spared, as in other poets there is much talk that only fills up time upon the stage; but the general system makes gradual advances, and the end of the play is the end of expectation.

To the unities of time and place he has shewn no regard; and perhaps a nearer view of the principles on which they stand, will diminish their value, and withdraw from them the veneration which, from the time of Corneille, they have very generally received, by discovering that they have given more trouble to the poet, than pleasure to the auditor.

The necessity of observing the unities of time and place arises from the supposed necessity of making the drama credible. The critics hold it impossible, that an action of months or years can be possibly believed to pass in three hours; or that the spectator can suppose himself to sit in the theatre, while ambassadors go and return between distant kings, while armies are levied and towns besieged, while an exile wanders and returns, or till he whom they saw courting his mistress, should lament the untimely fall of his son. The mind revolts from evident falsehood, and fiction loses its force when it departs from the resemblance of reality.

From

From the narrow limitation of time necessarily arises the contraction of place. The spectator, who knows that he saw the first act at Alexandria, cannot suppose that he sees the next at Rome, at a distance to which not the dragons of Medea could, in so short a time, have transported him; he knows with certainty that he has not changed his place; and he knows that place cannot change itself; that what was a house cannot become a plain; that what was Thebes can never be Persepolis.

Such is the triumphant language with which a critic exults over the misery of an irregular poet, and exults commonly without resistance or reply. It is time, therefore, to tell him, by the authority of Shakespeare, that he assumes, as an unquestionable principle, a position, which, while his breath is forming it into words, his understanding pronounces to be false. It is false, that any representation is mistaken for reality; that any dramatic fable, in its materiality, was ever credible, or, for a single moment, was ever credited.

The objection arising from the impossibility of passing the first hour at Alexandria, and the next at Rome, supposes, that when the play opens, the spectator really imagines himself at Alexandria; and believes that his walk to the theatre has been a voyage to Egypt, and that he lives in the days of Antony and Cleopatra. Surely he that imagines this may imagine more. He that can take the stage at one time for the palace of the Ptolemies, may take it in half an hour for the promontory of Actium. Delusion, if delusion be admitted, has no certain limitation; if the spectator can be once persuaded, that his old acquaintance are Alexander and Cæsar, that a room illuminated with candles is the plain of Pharsalia, or the bank of Granicus, he is in a state of elevation above the reach of reason, or of truth, and from the heights of empyrean poetry, may despise the circumspections of terrestrial nature. There is no reason why a mind thus wandering in ecstasy, should count the clock; or why an hour should not be a century in that calenture of the brain that can make the stage a field.

The truth is, that the spectators are always in their senses, and know, from the first act to the last, that the stage is only a stage, and that the players are only players. They came to hear a certain number of lines recited with just gesture and elegant modulation. The lines relate to some ac-

tion, and an action must be in some place; but the different actions that complete a story may be in places very remote from each other; and where is the absurdity of allowing that space to represent first Athens, and then Sicily, which was always known to be neither Sicily nor Athens, but a modern theatre?

By supposition, as place is introduced, time may be extended; the time required by the fable elapses for the most part between the acts; for, of so much of the action as is represented, the real and poetical duration is the same. If, in the first act, preparations for war against Mithridates are represented to be made in Rome, the event of the war may, without absurdity, be represented, in the catastrophe, as happening in Pontus; we know that there is neither war, nor preparation for war; we know that we are neither in Rome nor Pontus; that neither Mithridates nor Lucullus are before us. The drama exhibits successive imitations of successive actions; and why may not the second imitation represent an action that happened years after the first, if it be so connected with it, that nothing but time can be supposed to intervene? Time is, of all modes of existence, most obsequious to the imagination; a lapse of years is as easily conceived as a passage of hours. In contemplation we easily contract the time of real actions, and therefore willingly permit it to be contracted when we only see their imitation.

It will be asked, how the drama moves, if it is not credited? It is credited with all credit due to a drama. It is credited, whenever it moves, as a just picture of a real original; as representing to the auditor what he would himself feel, if he were to do or suffer what is there feigned to be suffered or to be done. The reflection that strikes the heart is not, that the evils before us are real evils, but that they are evils to which we ourselves may be exposed. If there be any fallacy, it is not that we fancy the players, but that we fancy ourselves unhappy for a moment; but we rather lament the possibility, than suppose the presence of misery, as a mother weeps over her babe, when she remembers that death may take it from her. The delight of tragedy proceeds from our consciousness of fiction; if we thought murders and treasons real, they would please no more.

Imitations produce pain or pleasure, not because

because they are mistaken for realities, but because they bring realities to mind. When the imagination is recreated by a painted landscape, the trees are not supposed capable to give us shade, or the fountains coolness; but we consider how we should be pleased with such fountains playing beside us, and such woods waving over us. We are agitated in reading the history of Henry the Fifth, yet no man takes his book for the field of Agincourt. A dramatic exhibition is a book recited with concomitants that increase or diminish its effect. Familiar comedy is often more powerful on the theatre, than in the page; imperial tragedy is always less. The humour of Petruchio may be heightened by grimace; but what voice or what gesture can hope to add dignity or force to the soliloquy of Cato?

A play read affects the mind like a play acted. It is therefore evident, that the action is not supposed to be real; and it follows, that between the acts a longer or shorter time may be allowed to pass, and that no more account of space or duration is to be taken by the auditor of a drama, than by the reader of a narrative, before whom may pass in an hour, the life of a hero, or the revolutions of an empire.

Whether Shakespeare knew the unities, and rejected them by design, or deviated from them by happy ignorance, it is, I think, impossible to decide, and useless to inquire. We may reasonably suppose, that, when he rose to notice, he did not want the counsels and admonitions of scholars and critics, and that he at last deliberately persisted in a practice, which he might have begun by chance. As nothing is essential to the fable but unity of action, and as the unities of time and place arise evidently from false assumptions, and by circumscribing the extent of the drama, lessens its variety, I cannot think it much to be lamented that they were not known by him, or not observed: nor, if such another poet could arise, should I very vehemently reproach him, that his first act passed at Venice, and his next in Cyprus. Such violations of rules, merely positive, become the comprehensive genius of Shakespeare, and such censures are suitable to the minute and slender criticism of Voltaire:

*Non usque adeo permisit iniis
Longus summa dies, ut non, si voce Metelli
Serventur leges, malint Cæsare tolli.*

Yet when I speak thus slightly of dramatic rules, I cannot but recollect how much wit and learning may be produced against me; before such authorities I am afraid to stand, not that I think the present question one of those that are to be decided by mere authority, but because it is to be suspected, that these perhaps have not been so easily received, but for better reasons than I have yet been able to find. The result of my enquiries, in which it would be ludicrous to boast of impartiality, is, that the unities of time and place are not essential to a just drama; that though they may sometimes conduce to pleasure, they are always to be sacrificed to the nobler beauties of variety and instruction; and that a play written with nice observation of critical rules, is to be contemplated as an elaborate curiosity, as the product of superfluous and ostentatious art, by which is shewn, rather what is possible than what is necessary.

He that, without diminution of any other excellence, shall preserve all the unities unbroken, deserves the like applause with the architect, who shall display all the orders of architecture in a citadel, without any deduction from its strength: but the principal beauty of a citadel is to exclude the enemy; and the greatest graces of a play are to copy nature, and instruct life.

Perhaps, what I have here not dogmatically but deliberately written, may recall the principles of the drama to a new examination. I am almost frightened at my own temerity; and when I estimate the fame and the strength of those that maintain the contrary opinion, am ready to sink down in reverential silence; as Æneas withdrew from the defence of Troy, when he saw Neptune shaking the wall, and Juno heading the besiegers.

Those whom my arguments cannot persuade to give their approbation to the judgment of Shakespeare, will easily, if they consider the condition of his life, make some allowance for his ignorance.

Every man's performances, to be rightly estimated, must be compared with the state of the age in which he lived, and with his own particular opportunities; and though to a reader a book be not worse or better for the circumstances of the author, yet as there is always a silent reference of human works to human abilities, and as the inquiry, how far man may extend his designs, or how high he may rate his native force,

force, is of far greater dignity than in what rank we shall place any particular performance, curiosity is always busy to discover the instruments, as well as to survey the workmanship, to know how much is to be ascribed to original powers, and how much to casual and adventitious help. The palaces of Peru or Mexico were certainly mean and incommodious habitations, if compared to the houses of European monarchs; yet who could forbear to view them with astonishment, who remembered that they were built without the use of iron?

The English nation, in the time of Shakspeare, was yet struggling to emerge from barbarity. The philology of Italy had been transplanted hither in the reign of Henry the Eighth; and the learned languages had been successfully cultivated by Lilly, Linacre, and More; by Pole, Cheke, and Gardiner; and afterwards by Smith, Clerk, Haddon, and Ascham. Greek was now taught to boys in the principal schools; and those who united elegance with learning, read, with great diligence, the Italian and Spanish poets. But literature was yet confined to professed scholars, or to men and women of high rank. The public was gross and dark; and to be able to read and write, was an accomplishment still valued for its rarity.

Nations, like individuals, have their infancy. A people, newly awakened to literary curiosity, being yet unacquainted with the true state of things, knows not how to judge of that which is proposed as its resemblance. Whatever is remote from common appearances is always welcome to vulgar, as to childish credulity; and of a country unenlightened by learning, the whole people is the vulgar. The study of those who then aspired to plebeian learning was laid out upon adventures, giants, dragons, and enchantments. The Death of Arthur was the favourite volume.

The mind, which was feasted on the luxurious wonders of fiction, has no taste of the insipidity of truth. A play, which imitated only the common occurrences of the world, would, upon the admirers of Palmerin and Guy of Warwick, have made little impression; he that wrote for such an audience was under the necessity of looking round for strange events and fabulous transactions; and that incredibility, by which maturer knowledge is offended, was the chief recommendation of writings to unskilful curiosity.

Our author's plots are generally borrowed from novels; and it is reasonable to suppose, that he chose the most popular, such as were read by many, and related by more; for his audience could not have followed him through the intricacies of the drama, had they not held the thread of the story in their hands.

The stories, which we now find only in remoter authors, were in his time accessible and familiar. The fable of *As you like it*, which is supposed to be copied from Chaucer's *Gamelyn*, was a little pamphlet of those times; and old Mr. Cibber remembered the tale of *Hamlet* in plain English prose, which the critics have now to seek in *Saxo Grammaticus*.

His English histories he took from English chronicles and English ballads; and as the ancient writers were made known to his countrymen by versions, they supplied him with new subjects; he dilated some of Plutarch's lives into plays, when they had been translated by North.

His plots, whether historical or fabulous, are always crowded with incidents, by which the attention of a rude people was more easily caught than by sentiment or argumentation; and such is the power of the marvellous, even over those who despise it, that every man finds his mind more strongly seized by the tragedies of Shakspeare than of any other writer: others please us by particular speeches; but he always makes us anxious for the event, and has, perhaps, excelled all but Homer in securing the first purpose of a writer, by exciting restless and unquenchable curiosity, and compelling him that reads his work to read it through.

The shows and bustle, with which his plays abound have the same original. As knowledge advances, pleasure passes from the eye to the ear, but returns, as it declines, from the ear to the eye. Those to whom our author's labours were exhibited, had more skill in pomps or processions than in poetical language, and perhaps wanted some visible and discriminated events, as comments on the dialogue. He knew how he should most please; and whether his practice is more agreeable to nature, or whether his example has prejudiced the nation, we still find, that on our stage something must be done, as well as said, and inactive declamation is very coldly heard, however musical or elegant, passionate or sublime.

Voltaire expresses his wonder, that our author's

author's extravagancies are endured by a nation, which has seen the tragedy of Cato. Let him be answered, that Addison speaks the language of poets, and Shakespeare of men. We find in Cato innumerable beauties which enamour us of its author, but we see nothing that acquaints us with human sentiments or human actions; we place it with the fairest and the noblest progeny which judgment propagates by conjunction with learning; but Othello is the vigorous and vivacious offspring of observation impregnated by genius. Cato affords a splendid exhibition of artificial and fictitious manners, and delivers just and noble sentiments, in diction easy, elevated and harmonious, but its hopes and fears communicate no vibration to the heart; the composition refers us only to the writer; we pronounce the name of Cato, but we think on Addison.

The work of a correct and regular writer is a garden accurately formed and diligently planted, varied with shades, and scented with flowers; the composition of Shakespeare is a forest, in which oaks extend their branches, and pines tower in the air, interspersed sometimes with weeds and brambles, and sometimes giving shelter to myrtils and to roses; filling the eye with awful pomp, and gratifying the mind with endless diversity. Other poets display cabinets of precious rarities, minutely finished, wrought into shape, and polished into brightness. Shakespeare opens a mine which contains gold and diamonds in inexhaustible plenty, though clouded by incrustations, debased by impurities, and mingled with a mass of meaner minerals.

It has been much disputed whether Shakespeare owed his excellence to his own native force, or whether he had the common helps of scholastic education, the precepts of critical science, and the examples of ancient authors.

There has always prevailed a tradition, that Shakespeare wanted learning, that he had no regular education, nor much skill in the dead languages. Jonson, his friend, affirms, that *he had small Latin and less Greek*; who, besides that he had no imaginable temptation to falsehood, wrote at a time when the character and acquisitions of Shakespeare were known to multitudes. His evidence ought therefore to decide the controversy, unless some testimony of equal force could be opposed.

Some have imagined, that they have discovered deep learning in many imitations

of old writers; but the examples which I have known urged were drawn from books translated in his time; or were such easy coincidences of thought, as will happen to all who consider the same subjects; or such remarks on life, or axioms of morality, as float in conversation, and are transmitted through the world in proverbial sentences.

I have found it remarked, that in this important sentence, *Go before, I'll follow*, we read a translation of *I pra, sequar*. I have been told, that when Caliban, after a pleasing dream, says, *I cry'd to sleep again*, the author imitates Anacreon, who had, like every other man, the same wish on the same occasion.

There are a few passages which may pass for imitations, but so few, that the exception only confirms the rule; he obtained them from accidental quotations, or by oral communication; and as he used what he had, would have used more if he had obtained it.

The Comedy of Errors is confessedly taken from the *Menæchmi* of Plautus; from the only play of Plautus which was then in English. What can be more probable, than that he who copied that would have copied more; but that these which were not translated were inaccessible?

Whether he knew the modern languages is uncertain. That his plays have some French scenes, proves but little; he might easily procure them to be written, and probably, even though he had known the language in the common degree, he could not have written it without assistance. In the story of *Romeo and Juliet*, he is observed to have followed the English translation, where it deviates from the Italian; but this, on the other part, proves nothing against his knowledge of the original. He was to copy, not what he knew himself, but what was known to his audience.

It is most likely that he had learned Latin sufficiently to make him acquainted with construction, but that he never advanced to an easy perusal of the Roman authors. Concerning his skill in modern languages, I can find no sufficient ground of determination; but, as no imitations of French or Italian authors have been discovered, though the Italian poetry was then high in esteem, I am inclined to believe, that he read little more than English, and chose for his fables only such tales as he found translated.

That much knowledge is scattered over his works is very justly observed by Pope, but

but it is often such knowledge as books did not supply. He that will understand Shakespeare must not be content to study him in the closet, he must look for his meaning sometimes among the sports of the field, and sometimes among the manufactures of the shop.

There is, however, proof enough that he was a very diligent reader, nor was our language then so indigent of books, but that he might very liberally indulge his curiosity without excursion into foreign literature. Many of the Roman authors were translated, and some of the Greek; the Reformation had filled the kingdom with theological learning; most of the topics of human disquisition had found English writers; and poetry had been cultivated, not only with diligence, but success. This was a stock of knowledge sufficient for a mind so capable of appropriating and improving it.

But the greater part of his excellence was the product of his own genius. He found the English stage in a state of the utmost rudeness; no essays either in tragedy or comedy had appeared, from which it could be discovered to what degree of delight either one or other might be carried. Neither character nor dialogue were yet understood. Shakespeare may be truly said to have introduced them both amongst us, and in some of his happier scenes to have carried them both to the utmost height.

By what gradations of improvement he proceeded, is not easily known; for the chronology of his works is yet unsettled, Rowe is of opinion, that *perhaps we are not to look for his beginning, like those of other writers, in his least perfect works; art had so little, and nature so large a share in what he did, that for aught I know, says he, the performances of his youth, as they were the most vigorous, were the best.* But the power of nature is only the power of using, to any certain purpose, the materials which diligence procures, or opportunity supplies. Nature gives no man knowledge, and, when images are collected by study and experience, can only assist in combining or applying them. Shakespeare, however favoured by nature, could impart only what he had learned; and, as he must increase his ideas, like other mortals, by gradual acquisition, he, like them, grew wiser as he grew older, could display life better, as he knew it more, and instruct

with more efficacy, as he was himself more amply instructed.

There is a vigilance of observation, and accuracy of distinction, which books and precepts cannot confer; from this, almost all original and native excellence proceeds. Shakespeare must have looked upon mankind with perspicacity, in the highest degree curious and attentive. Other writers borrow their characters from preceding writers, and diversify them only by the accidental appendages of present manners; the dress is a little varied, but the body is the same. Our author had both matter and form to provide; for, except the characters of Chaucer, to whom I think he is not much indebted, there were no writers in English, and perhaps not many in other modern languages, which shewed life in its native colours.

The contest about the original benevolence or malignity of man, had not yet commenced. Speculation had not yet attempted to analyse the mind, to trace the passions to their sources, to unfold the seminal principles of vice and virtue, or found the depths of the heart for the motives of action. All those inquiries, which from the time that human nature became the fashionable study, have been made sometimes with nice discernment, but often with idle subtilty, were yet unattempted. The tales with which the infancy of learning was satisfied, exhibited only the superficial appearances of action, related the events, but omitted the causes, and were formed for such as delighted in wonders rather than in truth. Mankind was not then to be studied in the closet; he that would know the world, was under the necessity of gleanings his own remarks, by mingling, as he could, in its business and amusements.

Boyle congratulated himself upon his high birth, because it favoured his curiosity, by facilitating his access. Shakespeare had no such advantage; he came to London a needy adventurer, and lived for a time by very mean employments. Many works of genius and learning have been performed in states of life that appear very little favourable to thought, or to enquiry: so many, that he who considers them, is inclined to think that he sees enterprise and perseverance predominating over all external agency, and bidding help and hindrance vanish before them. The genius of Shakespeare was not to be depressed by the weight
of

of poverty, nor limited by the narrow conversation to which men in want are inevitably condemned; the incumbrances of his fortune were shaken from his mind, as dew-drops from a lion's mane.

Though he had so many difficulties to encounter, and so little assistance to surmount them, he has been able to obtain an exact knowledge of many modes of life, and many casts of native dispositions; to vary them with great multiplicity; to mark them by nice distinctions; and to shew them in full view by proper combinations. In this part of his performances he had none to imitate, but has been himself imitated by all succeeding writers; and it may be doubted whether, from all his successors, more maxims of theoretical knowledge, or more rules of practical prudence, can be collected, than he alone has given to his country.

Nor was his attention confined to the actions of men; he was an exact surveyor of the inanimate world; his descriptions have always some peculiarities, gathered by contemplating things as they really exist. It may be observed, that the oldest poets of many nations preserve their reputation, and that the following generations of wit, after a short celebrity, sink into oblivion. The first, whoever they be, must take their sentiments and descriptions immediately from knowledge; the resemblance is therefore just; their descriptions are verified by every eye, and their sentiments acknowledged by every breast. Those whom their fame invites to the same studies, copy partly them, and partly nature, till the books of one age gain such authority, as to stand in the place of nature to another; and imitation, always deviating a little, becomes at last capricious and casual. Shakespeare, whether life or nature be his subject, shews plainly that he has seen with his own eyes; he gives the image which he receives, not weakened or distorted by the intervention of any other mind; the ignorant feel his representations to be just, and the learned see that they are complete.

Perhaps it would not be easy to find any author, except Homer, who invented so much as Shakespeare, who so much advanced the studies which he cultivated, or effused so much novelty upon his age or country. The form, the characters, the language, and the shows of the English drama are his. *He seems, says Dennis, to have been the very original of our English tragical harmony, that is, the harmony of*

blank verse, diversified often by dissyllable and trissyllable terminations. For the diversity distinguishes it from heroic harmony, and by bringing it nearer to common use, makes it more proper to gain attention, and more fit for action and dialogue. Such verse we make when we are writing prose; we make such verse in common conversation.

I know not whether this praise is rigorously just. The dissyllable termination, which the critic rightly appropriates to the drama, is to be found, though, I think, not in *Gorboduc*, which is confessedly before our author; yet in *Hieronymus**, of which the date is not certain, but which there is reason to believe at least as old as his earliest plays. This however is certain, that he is the first who taught either tragedy or comedy to please, there being no theatrical piece of any older writer, of which the name is known, except to antiquaries and collectors of books, which are sought because they are scarce, and would not have been scarce had they been much esteemed.

To him we must ascribe the praise, unless Spenser may divide it with him, of having first discovered to how much smoothness and harmony the English language could be softened. He has speeches, perhaps sometimes scenes, which have all the delicacy of Rowe, without his effeminacy. He endeavours indeed, commonly to strike by the force and vigour of his dialogue, but he never executes his purpose better, than when he tries to soothe by softness.

Yet it must be at last confessed, that as we owe every thing to him, he owes something to us; that, if much of his praise is paid by perception and judgment, much is likewise given by custom and veneration. We fix our eyes upon his graces, and turn them from his deformities, and endure in him what we should in another loath or despise. If we endured without praising, respect for the father of our drama might excuse us; but I have seen, in the book of some modern critic, a collection of anomalies, which shew that he has corrupted language by every mode of depravation, but which his admirer has accumulated as a monument of honour.

He has scenes of undoubted and perpetual excellence, but perhaps not one play, which if it were now exhibited as the work of a contemporary writer, would be heard to the conclusion. I am indeed far from

* It appears, from the induction of Ben Jonson's *Barbolomeu-Fair*, to have been acted before the year 1590.

STEEVENS.

thinking,

thinking, that his works were wrought to his own ideas of perfection; when they were such as would satisfy the audience, they satisfied the writer. It is seldom that authors, though more studious of fame than Shakespeare, rise much above the standard of their own age; to add a little to what is best, will always be sufficient for present praise, and those who find themselves exalted into fame, are willing to credit their encomiasts, and to spare the labour of contending with themselves.

It does not appear, that Shakespeare thought his works worthy of posterity, that he levied any ideal tribute upon future times, or had any farther prospect, than of present popularity and present profit. When his plays had been acted, his hope was at an end; he solicited no addition of honour from the reader. He therefore made no scruple to repeat the same jests in many dialogues, or to entangle different plots by the same knot of perplexity; which may be at least forgiven him by those who recollect, that of Congreve's four comedies, two are concluded by a marriage in a mask, by a deception, which, perhaps, never happened, and which, whether likely or not, he did not invent.

So careless was this great poet of future fame, that, though he retired to ease and plenty, while he was yet little *declined into the vale of years*, before he could be disgusted with fatigue, or disabled by infirmity, he made no collection of his works, nor desired to rescue those that had been already published from the depravations that obscured them, or secure to the rest a better destiny, by giving them to the world in their genuine state. *Johnson.*

§ 234. POPE'S Preface to his HOMER.

Homer is universally allowed to have had the greatest Invention of any writer whatever. The praise of Judgment Virgil has justly contested with him, and others may have their pretensions as to particular excellencies; but his Invention remains yet unrivalled. Nor is it a wonder if he has ever been acknowledged the greatest of poets, who most excelled in that which is the very foundation of poetry. It is the Invention that in different degrees distinguishes all great geniuses; the utmost stretch of human study, learning, and industry, which masters every thing besides, can never attain to this. It furnishes Art with all her materials, and without it, Judgment itself can at best but steal wisely; for

Art is only like a prudent steward that lives on managing the riches of Nature. Whatever praises may be given to works of judgment, there is not even a single beauty in them to which the invention must not contribute: as in the most regular gardens, art can only reduce the beauties of nature to more regularity, and such a figure, which the common eye may better take in, and is therefore more entertained with. And perhaps the reason why common critics are inclined to prefer a judicious and methodical genius to a great and fruitful one is, because they find it easier for themselves to pursue their observations through an uniform and bounded walk of art, than to comprehend the vast and various extent of nature.

Our author's work is a wild paradise, where if we cannot see all the beauties so distinctly as in an ordered garden, it is only because the number of them is infinitely greater. It is like a copious nursery which contains the seeds and first productions of every kind, out of which those who followed him have but selected some particular plants, each according to his fancy, to cultivate and beautify. If some things are too luxuriant, it is owing to the richness of the soil; and if others are not arrived to perfection or maturity, it is only because they are over-run and oppress'd by those of a stronger nature.

It is to the strength of this amazing invention we are to attribute that unequalled fire and rapture, which is so forcible in Homer, that no man of a true poetical spirit is master of himself while he reads him. What he writes, is of the most animated nature imaginable; every thing moves, every thing lives, and is put in action. If a council be called, or a battle fought, you are not coldly informed of what was said or done as from a third person; the reader is hurried out of himself by the force of the poet's imagination, and turns in one place to a hearer, in another to a spectator. The course of his verses resembles that of the army he describes:

Of the Army, Homer's description.
 "They pour along like a fire that sweeps
 "the whole earth before it." It is however remarkable that his fancy, which is every where vigorous, is not discovered immediately at the beginning of his poem in its fullest splendor: it grows in the progress both upon himself and others, and becomes on fire, like a chariot-wheel, by its own rapidity. Exact disposition, judgment,

thought, correct elocution, polished numbers, may have been found in a thousand; but this poetical fire, this "*vivida vis animi*," in a very few. Even in works where all those are imperfect or neglected, this can overpower criticism, and make us admire even while we disapprove. Nay, where this appears, though attended with absurdities, it brightens all the rubbish about it, till we see nothing but its own splendor. This fire is discerned in Virgil, but discerned as through a glass, reflected from Homer, more shining than fierce, but every where equal and constant: in Lucan, and Statius, it bursts out in sudden, short, and interrupted flashes: in Milton it glows like a furnace kept up to an uncommon ardor by the force of art: in Shakespeare, it strikes before we are aware, like an accidental fire from heaven: but in Homer, and in him only, it burns every where clearly, and every where irresistibly.

I shall here endeavour to shew, how this vast invention exerts itself in a manner superior to that of any poet, through all the main constituent parts of his work, as it is the great and peculiar characteristic which distinguishes him from all other authors.

This strong and ruling faculty was like a powerful star, which, in the violence of its course, drew all things within its vortex. It seemed not enough to have taken in the whole circle of arts, and the whole compass of nature, to supply his maxims and reflections; all the inward passions and affections of mankind, to furnish his characters; and all the outward forms and images of things for his descriptions; but, wanting yet an ampler sphere to expatiate in, he opened a new and boundless walk for his imagination, and created a world for himself in the invention of fable. That which Aristotle calls the "*Soul of poetry*," was first breathed into it by Homer. I shall begin with considering him in this part, as it is naturally the first; and I speak of it both as it means the design of a poem, and as it is taken for fiction.

Fable may be divided into the Probable, the Allegorical, and the Marvellous. The probable fable is the recital of such actions as though they did not happen, yet might, in the common course of nature: or of such as, though they did, become fables by the additional episodes and manner of telling them. Of this sort is the main story of an epic poem, the return of Ulysses, the settlement of the Trojans in Italy, or the like. That of the *Iliad* is the anger of

Achilles, the most short and single subject that ever was chosen by any poet. Yet this he has supplied with a vaster variety of incidents and events, and crowded with a greater number of councils, speeches, battles, and episodes of all kinds, than are to be found even in those poems whose schemes are of the utmost latitude and irregularity. The action is hurried on with the most vehement spirit, and its whole duration employs not so much as fifty days. Virgil, for want of so warm a genius, aided himself by taking in a more extensive subject, as well as a greater length of time, and contracting the design of both Homer's poems into one, which is yet but a fourth part as large as his. The other epic poets have used the same practice, but generally carried it so far as to superinduce a multiplicity of fables, destroy the unity of action, and lose their readers in an unreasonable length of time. Nor is it only in the main design that they have been unable to add to his invention, but they have followed him in every episode and part of story. If he has given a regular catalogue of an army, they all draw up their forces in the same order. If he has funeral games for Patroclus, Virgil has the same for Anchises; and Statius (rather than omit them) destroys the unity of his action for those of Archemoras. If Ulysses visits the shades, the *Aeneas* of Virgil, and Scipio of Silius, are sent after him. If he be detained from his return by the allurements of Calypso, so is *Aeneas* by Dido, and Rinaldo by Armida. If Achilles be absent from the army on the score of a quarrel through half the poem, Rinaldo must absent himself just as long, on the like account. If he gives his hero a suit of celestial armour, Virgil and Tasso make the same present to theirs. Virgil has not only observed this close imitation of Homer, but where he had not led the way, supplied the want from other Greek authors. Thus the story of Sinon and the taking of Troy was copied (says Macrobius) almost word for word from Pisander, as the loves of Dido and *Aeneas* are taken from those of Medea and Jason in Apollonius, and several others in the same manner.

To proceed to the allegorical fable: if we reflect upon those innumerable knowledges, those secrets of nature and physical philosophy, which Homer is generally supposed to have wrapped up in his allegories, what a new and ample scene of wonder may this consideration afford us! how fertile

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will that imagination appear, which was able to clothe all the properties of elements, the qualifications of the mind, the virtues and vices, in forms and persons; and to introduce them into actions agreeable to the nature of the things they shadowed! This is a field in which no succeeding poets could dispute with Homer; and whatever commendations have been allowed them on this head, are by no means for their invention in having enlarged his circle, but for their judgment in having contracted it. For when the mode of learning changed in following ages, and science was delivered in a plainer manner; it then became as reasonable in the more modern poets to lay it aside, as it was in Homer to make use of it. And perhaps it was no unhappy circumstance for Virgil, that there was not in his time that demand upon him of so great an invention, as might be capable of furnishing all those allegorical parts of a poem.

The marvellous fable includes whatever is supernatural, and especially the machines of the gods. He seems the first who brought them into a system of machinery for poetry, and such a one as makes its greatest importance and dignity. For we find those authors who have been offended at the literal notion of the gods, constantly laying their accusation against Homer as the chief support of it. But whatever cause there might be to blame his machines in a philosophical or religious view, they are so perfect in the poetic, that mankind have been ever since contented to follow them: none have been able to enlarge the sphere of poetry beyond the limits he has set; every attempt of this nature has proved unsuccessful; and after all the various changes of times and religions, his gods continue to this day the gods of poetry.

We come now to the characters of his persons; and here we shall find no author has ever drawn so many, with so visible and surprising a variety, or given us such lively and affecting impressions of them. Every one has something so singularly his own, that no painter could have distinguished them more by their features, than the poet has by their manners. Nothing can be more exact than the distinctions he has observed in the different degrees of virtues and vices. The single quality of courage is wonderfully diversified in the several characters of the *Iliad*. That of Achilles is furious and intractable; that of Diomedes forward, yet listening to advice, and subject to command: that of Ajax is heavy, and

self-confiding; of Hector, active and vigilant: the courage of Agamemnon is inspirited by love of empire and ambition; that of Menelaus mixed with softness and tenderness for his people: we find in Idomeneus a plain direct soldier, in Sarpedon a gallant and generous one. Nor is this judicious and astonishing diversity to be found only in the principal quality which constitutes the main of each character, but even in the under-parts of it, to which he takes care to give a tincture of that principal one. For example, the main characters of Ulysses and Nestor consist in wisdom; and they are distinct in this, that the wisdom of one is artificial and various, of the other natural, open, and regular. But they have, besides, characters of courage; and this quality also takes a different turn in each from the difference of his prudence: for one in the war depends still upon caution, the other upon experience. It would be endless to produce instances of these kinds.—The characters of Virgil are far from striking us in this open manner; they lie in a great degree hidden and undistinguished, and where they are marked most evidently, affect us not in proportion to those of Homer. His characters of valour are much alike; even that of Turnus seems no way peculiar but as it is in a superior degree; and we see nothing that differences the courage of Mnestheus from that of Sergesthus, Cloanthus, or the rest. In like manner it may be remarked of Statius's heroes, that an air of impetuosity runs through them all; the same horrid and savage courage appears in his Capaneus, Tydeus, Hippomedon, &c. They have a parity of character, which makes them seem brothers of one family. I believe when the reader is led into this track of reflection, if he will pursue it through the epic and tragical writers, he will be convinced how infinitely superior in this point the invention of Homer was to that of all others.

The speeches are to be considered as they flow from the characters, being perfect or defective as they agree or disagree with the manners of those who utter them. As there is more variety of characters in the *Iliad*, so there is of speeches, than in any other poem. Every thing in it has manners (as Aristotle expresses it) that is, every thing is acted or spoken. It is hardly credible, in a work of such length, how small a number of lines are employed in narration. In Virgil the dramatic part is

less in proportion to the narrative; and the speeches often consist of general reflections or thoughts, which might be equally just in any person's mouth upon the same occasion. As many of his persons have no apparent characters, so many of his speeches escape being applied and judged by the rule of propriety. We oftener think of the author himself when we read Virgil, than when we are engaged in Homer; all which are the effects of a colder invention, that interests us less in the action described; Homer makes us hearers, and Virgil leaves us readers.

If in the next place we take a view of the sentiments, the same presiding faculty is eminent in the sublimity and spirit of his thoughts. Longinus has given his opinion, that it was in this part Homer principally excelled. What were alone sufficient to prove the grandeur and excellence of his sentiments in general, is, that they have so remarkable a parity with those of the scripture: Dupont, in his *Gnomologia Homerica*, has collected innumerable instances of this sort. And it is with justice an excellent modern writer allows, that if Virgil has not so many thoughts that are low and vulgar, he has not so many that are sublime and noble; and that the Roman author seldom rises into very astonishing sentiments, where he is not fired by the *Iliad*.

If we observe his descriptions, images, and similes, we shall find the invention still predominant. To what else can we ascribe that vast comprehension of images of every sort, where we see each circumstance of art, and individual of nature, summoned together, by the extent and fecundity of his imagination; to which all things, in their various views, presented themselves in an instant, and had their impressions taken off to perfection at a heat? Nay, he not only gives us the full prospects of things, but several unexpected peculiarities and side-views, unobserved by any painter but Homer. Nothing is so surprising as the descriptions of his battles, which take up no less than half the *Iliad*, and are supplied with so vast a variety of incidents, that no one bears a likeness to another; such different kinds of deaths, that no two heroes are wounded in the same manner; and such a profusion of noble ideas, that every battle rises above the last in greatness, horror, and confusion. It is certain there is not near that number of images and descriptions in any epic poet; though every one has assisted himself with a great

quantity out of him: and it is evident of Virgil especially, that he has scarce any comparisons which are not drawn from his master.

If we descend from hence to the expression, we see the bright imagination of Homer shining out in the most enlivened forms of it. We acknowledge him the father of poetical diction, the first who taught that language of the gods to men. His expression is like the colouring of some great masters, which discovers itself to be laid on boldly, and executed with rapidity. It is indeed the strongest and most glowing imaginable, and touched with the greatest spirit. Aristotle had reason to say, he was the only poet who had found out living words; there are in him more daring figures and metaphors than in any good author whatever. An arrow is impatient to be on the wing, and a weapon thirsts to drink the blood of an enemy, and the like. Yet his expression is never too big for the sense, but justly great in proportion to it. It is the sentiment that swells and fills out the diction, which rises with it, and forms itself about it: for in the same degree that a thought is warmer, an expression will be brighter; as that is more strong, this will become more perspicuous: like glass in the furnace, which grows to a greater magnitude, and refines to a greater clearness, only as the breath within is more powerful, and the heat more intense.

To throw his language more out of prose, Homer seems to have affected the compound epithets. This was a sort of composition peculiarly proper to poetry, not only as it heightened the diction, but as it assisted and filled the numbers with greater sound and pomp, and likewise conducted in some measure to thicken the images. On this last consideration I cannot but attribute these also to the fruitfulness of his invention, since (as he has managed them) they are a sort of supernumerary pictures of the persons or things to which they are joined. We see the motion of Hector's plumes in the epithet *αεθυβόλοιο*, the landscape of Mount Neritus in that of *Νηριτιάδης*, and so of others; which particular images could not have been inserted upon so long as to express them in a description (though but of a single line) without diverting the reader too much from the principal action or figure. As a metaphor is a short simile, one of these epithets is a short description.

Lastly, if we consider his versification we shall be sensible what a share of praise

is due to his invention in that. He was not satisfied with his language as he found it settled in any one part of Greece, but searched through its differing dialects with this particular view, to beautify and perfect his numbers: he considered these as they had a greater mixture of vowels or consonants, and accordingly employed them as the verse required either a greater smoothness or strength. What he most affected was the Ionic, which has a peculiar sweetness from its never using contractions and from its custom of resolving the diphthongs into two syllables, so as to make the words open themselves with a more spreading and sonorous fluency. With this he mingled the Attic contractions, the broader Doric, and the feeblèr Æolic, which often rejects its aspirate, or takes off its accent; and compleated this variety by altering some letters with the licence of poetry. Thus his measures, instead of being fetters to his sense, were always in readiness to run along with the warmth of his rapture, and even to give a farther representation of his motions, in the correspondence of their sounds to what they signified. Out of all these he has derived that harmony, which makes us confess he had not only the richest head, but the finest ear in the world. This is so great a truth, that whoever will but consult the tune of his verses, even without understanding them (with the same sort of diligence as we daily see practised in the case of Italian operas) will find more sweetness, variety, and majesty of sound, than in any other language or poetry. The beauty of his numbers is allowed by the critics to be copied but faintly by Virgil himself, though they are so just to ascribe it to the nature of the Latin tongue; indeed, the Greek has some advantages, both from the natural sound of its words, and the turn and cadence of its verse, which agree with the genius of no other language. Virgil was very sensible of this, and used the utmost diligence in working up a more intractable language to whatsoever graces it was capable of; and in particular never failed to bring the sound of his line to a beautiful agreement with its sense. If the Grecian poet has not been so frequently celebrated on this account as the Roman, the only reason is, that fewer critics have understood one language than the other. Dionysius of Halicarnassus has pointed out many of our author's beauties in this kind, in his treatise

of the Composition of Words. It suffices at present to observe of his numbers, that they flow with so much ease, as to make one imagine Homer had no other care than to transcribe, as fast as the Muses dictated; and at the same time with so much force and inspiring vigour, that they awaken and raise us like the sound of a trumpet. They roll along as a plentiful river, always in motion, and always full; while we are borne away by a tide of verse, the most rapid and yet the most smooth imaginable.

Thus, on whatever side we contemplate Homer, what principally strikes us is his Invention. It is that which forms the character of each part of his work; and accordingly we find it to have made his fable more extensive and copious than any other, his manners more lively and strongly marked, his speeches more affecting and transported, his sentiments more warm and sublime, his images and descriptions more full and animated, his expression more raised and daring, and his numbers more rapid and various. I hope, in what has been said of Virgil, with regard to any of these heads, I have no way derogated from his character. Nothing is more absurd or endless, than the common method of comparing eminent writers by an opposition of particular passages in them, and forming a judgment from thence of their merit upon the whole. We ought to have a certain knowledge of the principal character and distinguishing excellence of each: it is in that we are to consider him, and in proportion to his degree in that we are to admire him. No author or man ever excelled all the world in more than one faculty; and as Homer has done this in Invention, Virgil has in Judgment. Not that we are to think Homer wanted Judgment, because Virgil had it in a more eminent degree, or that Virgil wanted Invention, because Homer possessed a larger share of it: each of these great authors had more of both than perhaps any man besides, and are only said to have less in comparison with one another. Homer was the greater genius, Virgil the better artist. In one we most admire the man, in the other the work: Homer hurries and transports us with a commanding impetuosity, Virgil leads us with an attractive majesty: Homer scatters with a generous profusion, Virgil bestows with a careful magnificence: Homer, like the Nile, pours out his riches with a boundless overflow;

Virgil, like a river in its banks, with a gentle and constant stream. When we behold their battles, methinks the two poets resemble the heroes they celebrate; Homer, boundless and irresistible as Achilles, bears all before him, and shines more and more as the tumult increases; Virgil, calmly daring like Æneas, appears undisturbed in the midst of the action; disposes all about him, and conquers with tranquillity. And when we look upon their machines, Homer seems like his own Jupiter in his terrors, shaking Olympus, scattering the lightnings, and firing the heavens; Virgil, like the same power in his benevolence, counselling with the gods, laying plans for empires, and regularly ordering his whole creation.

But after all, it is with great parts, as with great virtues, they naturally border on some imperfection; and it is often hard to distinguish exactly where the virtue ends, or the fault begins. As prudence may sometimes sink to suspicion, so may a great judgment decline to coldness; and as magnanimity may run up to profusion or extravagance, so may a great invention lead to redundancy or wildness. If we look upon Homer in this view, we shall perceive the chief objections against him to proceed from so noble a cause as the excess of this faculty.

Among these we may reckon some of his Marvellous Fictions, upon which so much criticism has been spent, as surpassing all the bounds of probability. Perhaps it may be with great and superior souls, as with gigantic bodies, which, exerting themselves with unusual strength, exceed what is commonly thought the due proportion of parts, to become miracles in the whole; and, like the old heroes of that make, commit something near extravagance, amidst a series of glorious and inimitable performances. Thus Homer has his speaking horses, and Virgil his myrtles distilling blood; where the latter has not so much as contrived the easy intervention of a Deity to save the probability.

It is owing to the same vast invention, that his similes have been thought too exuberant and full of circumstances. The force of his faculty is seen in nothing more, than in its inability to confine itself to that single circumstance upon which the comparison is grounded: it runs out into embellishments of additional images, which however are so managed as not to over-

power the main one. His similes are like pictures, where the principal figure has not only its proportion given agreeable to the original, but is also set off with occasional ornaments and prospects. The same will account for his manner of heaping a number of comparisons together in one breath, when his fancy suggested to him at once so many various and corresponding images. The reader will easily extend this observation to more objections of the same kind.

If there are others which seem rather to charge him with a defect or narrowness of genius, than an excess of it; those seeming defects will be found upon examination to proceed wholly from the nature of the times he lived in. Such are his grosser representations of the gods, and the vicious and imperfect manners of his heroes; but I must here speak a word of the latter, as it is a point generally carried into extremes, both by the censurers and defenders of Homer. It must be a strange partiality to antiquity, to think with Madam Dacier, "that those times and manners are so much the more excellent, as they are more contrary to ours." Who can be so prejudiced in their favour as to magnify the felicity of those ages, when a spirit of revenge and cruelty, joined with the practice of rapine and robbery, reigned through the world; when no mercy was shewn but for the sake of lucre; when the greatest princes were put to the sword, and their wives and daughters made slaves and concubines? On the other side, I would not be so delicate as those modern critics, who are shocked at the servile offices and mean employments in which we sometimes see the heroes of Homer engaged. There is a pleasure in taking a view of that simplicity in opposition to the luxury of succeeding ages, in beholding monarchs without their guards, princes tending their flocks, and princesses drawing water from the springs. When we read Homer, we ought to reflect that we are reading the most ancient author in the heathen world; and those who consider him in this light will double their pleasure in the perusal of him. Let them think they are growing acquainted with nations and people that are now no more; that they are stepping almost three thousand years back into the remotest antiquity, and entertaining themselves with a clear and surprising vision of things no where else

to be found, the only true mirror of that ancient world. By this means alone their greatest obstacles will vanish; and what usually creates their dislike, will become a satisfaction.

This consideration may farther serve to answer for the constant use of the same epithets to his gods and heroes, such as the far-darting Phœbus, the blue-eyed Pallas, the swift-footed Achilles, &c. which some have censured as impertinent and tediously repeated. Those of the gods depended upon the powers and offices then believed to belong to them, and had contracted a weight and veneration from the rites and solemn devotions in which they were used; they were a sort of attributes in which it was a matter of religion to salute them on all occasions, and which it was an irreverence to omit. As for the epithets of great men, *Monf. Boileau* is of opinion, that they were in the nature of surnames, and repeated as such; for the Greeks, having no names derived from their fathers, were obliged to add some other distinction of each person; either naming his parents expressly, or his place of birth, profession, or the like: as *Alexander*, the son of *Philip*, *Herodotus* of *Halicarnassus*, *Diogenes* the *Cynic*, &c. *Homer* therefore, complying with the custom of his country, used such distinctive additions as better agreed with poetry. And indeed we have something parallel to these in modern times, such as the names of *Harold Harefoot*, *Edmund Ironside*, *Edward Long-shanks*, *Edward the Black Prince*, &c. If yet this be thought to account better for the propriety than for the repetition, I shall add a farther conjecture: *Hesiod*, dividing the world into its different ages, has placed a fourth age between the brazen and the iron one, of "Heroes distinct from other men: a divine race, who fought at *Thebes* and *Troy*, are called *Demi-Gods*, and live by the care of *Jupiter* in the islands of the blessed *." Now among the divine honours which were paid them, they might have this also in common with the gods, not to be mentioned without the solemnity of an epithet, and such as might be acceptable to them by its celebrating their families, actions, or qualities.

What other cavils have been raised against *Homer*, are such as hardly deserve a reply, but will yet be taken notice of as they occur in the course of the work.

Many have been occasioned by an injudicious endeavour to exalt *Virgil*; which is much the same; as if one should think to raise the superstructure by undermining the foundation: one would imagine, by the whole course of their parallels, that these critics never so much as heard of *Homer's* having written first; a consideration which whoever compares these two poets ought to have always in his eye. Some accuse him for the same things which they overlook or praise in the other; as when they prefer the fable and moral of the *Æneis* to those of the *Iliad*, for the same reasons which might set the *Odyssey* above the *Æneis*: as that the hero is a wiser man; and the action of the one more beneficial to his country than that of the other: or else they blame him for not doing what he never designed; as because *Achilles* is not as good and perfect a prince as *Æneas*, when the very moral of his poem required a contrary character: it is thus that *Rapin* judges in his comparison of *Homer* and *Virgil*. Others select those particular passages of *Homer*, which are not so laboured as some that *Virgil* drew out of them: this is the whole management of *Scaliger* in his *Poetices*. Others quarrel with what they take for low and mean expressions, sometimes through a false delicacy and refinement, oftener from an ignorance of the graces of the original; and then triumph in the awkwardness of their own translations; this is the conduct of *Perault* in his *Parallels*. Lastly, there are others, who, pretending to a fairer proceeding, distinguish between the personal merit of *Homer*, and that of his work; but when they come to assign the causes of the great reputation of the *Iliad*, they found it upon the ignorance of his times and the prejudice of those that followed: and, in pursuance of this principle, they make those accidents (such as the contention of the cities, &c.) to be the causes of his fame, which were in reality the consequences of his merit. The same might as well be said of *Virgil* or any great author, whose general character will infallibly raise many casual additions to their reputation. This is the method of *Monf. de la Motte*; who yet confesses upon the whole, that in whatever age *Homer* had lived, he must have been the greatest poet of his nation, and that he may be said in this sense to be the master even of those who surpassed him.

In all these objections we see nothing that contradicts his title to the honour of

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* *Hesiod*, lib. i. ver. 155, &c.

the chief invention; and as long as this (which indeed is the characteristic of poetry itself) remains unequalled by his followers, he still continues superior to them. A cooler judgment may commit fewer faults, and be more approved in the eyes of one sort of critics: but that warmth of fancy will carry the loudest and most universal applauses, which holds the heart of a reader under the strongest enchantment. Homer not only appears the inventor of poetry, but excels all the inventors of other arts in this, that he has swallowed up the honour of those who succeeded him. What he has done admitted no increase, it only left room for contraction or regulation. He shewed all the stretch of fancy at once; and if he has failed in some of his flights, it was but because he attempted every thing. A work of this kind seems like a mighty tree which rises from the most vigorous seed, is improved with industry, flourishes, and produces the finest fruit; nature and art conspire to raise it; pleasure and profit join to make it valuable: and they who find the justest faults, have only said, that a few branches (which run luxuriant through a richness of nature) might be lopped into form to give it a more regular appearance.

Having now spoken of the beauties and defects of the original, it remains to treat of the translation, with the same view to the chief characteristic. As far as that is seen in the main parts of the poem, such as the fable, manners, and sentiments, no translator can prejudice it but by wilful omissions or contractions. As it also breaks out in every particular image, description, and simile, whoever lessens or too much softens those, takes off from this chief character. It is the first grand duty of an interpreter to give his author entire and unmaimed; and for the rest, the diction and versification only are his proper province; since these must be his own, but the others he is to take as he finds them.

It should then be considered, what methods may afford some equivalent in our language for the graces of these in the Greek. It is certain no literal translation can be just to an excellent original in a superior language: but it is a great mistake to imagine (as many have done) that a rash paraphrase can make amends for this general defect; which is no less in danger to lose the spirit of an ancient, by deviating into the modern manners of expression. If there be sometimes a dark-

ness, there is often a light in antiquity which nothing better preserves than a version almost literal. I know no liberties one ought to take, but those which are necessary for transfusing the spirit of the original, and supporting the poetical style of the translation: and I will venture to say, there have not been more men misled in former times by a servile dull adherence to the latter, than have been deluded in ours by a chimerical insolent hope of raising and improving their author. It is not to be doubted that the fire of the poem, is what a translator should principally regard, as it is most likely to expire in his managing: however, it is his safest way to be content with preserving this to his utmost in the whole, without endeavouring to be more than he finds his author is, in any particular place. It is a great secret in writing, to know when to be plain, and when poetical and figurative; and it is what Homer will teach us, if we will but follow modestly in his footsteps. Where his diction is bold and lofty, let us raise ours as high as we can; but where he is plain and humble, we ought not to be deterred from imitating him by the fear of incurring the censure of a mere English critic. Nothing that belongs to Homer seems to have been more commonly mistaken than the just pitch of his style; some of his translators having swelled into fustian in a proud confidence of the sublime; others sunk into flatness in a cold and timorous notion of simplicity. Methinks I see these different followers of Homer, some sweating and straining after him by violent leaps and bounds, (the certain signs of false mettle); others slowly and servilely creeping in his train, while the poet himself is all the time proceeding with an unaffected and equal majesty before them. However, of the two extremes, one could sooner pardon frenzy than frigidity; no author is to be envied for such commendations as he may gain by that character of style, which his friends must agree together to call simplicity, and the rest of the world will call dulness. There is a graceful and dignified simplicity, as well as a bald and sordid one, which differ as much from each other as the air of a plain man from that of a slob: it is one thing to be tricked up, and another not to be dressed at all. Simplicity is the mean between ostentation and rusticity.

This pure and noble simplicity is nowhere in such perfection as in the Scripture

ture and our author. One may affirm, with all respect to the inspired writings, that the divine spirit made use of no other words but what were intelligible and common to men at that time, and in that part of the world; and as Homer is the author nearest to those, his style must of course bear a greater resemblance to the sacred books than that of any other writer. This consideration (together with what has been observed of the parity of some of his thoughts) may methinks induce a translator on the one hand to give into several of those general-phrases and manners of expression, which have attained a veneration even in our language from being used in the Old Testament; as on the other, to avoid those which have been appropriated to the Divinity, and in a manner consigned to mystery and religion.

For a farther preservation of this air of simplicity, a particular care should be taken to express with all plainness, those moral sentences and proverbial speeches which are so numerous in this poet. They have something venerable, and I may say oracular, in that unadorned gravity and shortness with which they are delivered: a grace which would be utterly lost by endeavouring to give them what we call a more ingenious (that is, a more modern) turn in the paraphrase.

Perhaps the mixture of some Grecisms and old words, after the manner of Milton, if done without too much affectation, might not have an ill effect in a version of this particular work, which most of any other seems to require a venerable antique cast. But certainly the use of modern terms of war and government, such as platoon, campaign, junto, or the like (into which some of his translators have fallen) cannot be allowable; those only excepted, without which it is impossible to treat the subjects in any living language.

There are two peculiarities in Homer's diction, which are a sort of marks, or moles, by which every common eye distinguishes him at first sight: those who are not his greatest admirers look upon them as defects, and those who are, seem pleased with them as beauties. I speak of his compound epithets, and of his repetitions. Many of the former cannot be done literally into English without destroying the purity of our language. I believe such should be retained as slide easily of themselves into an English com-

pound, without violence to the ear, or to the received rules of composition; as well as those which have received a sanction from the authority of our best poets, and are become familiar through their use of them; such as the cloud-compelling Jove, &c. As for the rest, whenever any can be as fully and significantly expressed in a single word as in a compound one, the course to be taken is obvious.

Some that cannot be so turned as to preserve their full image by one or two words, may have justice done them by circumlocution; as the epithet *ἰσοσίφυλλος* to a mountain, would appear little or ridiculous translated literally "leaf-shaking," but affords a majestic idea in the periphrasis: "The lofty mountain shakes his waving woods." Others that admit of differing significations, may receive an advantage by a judicious variation according to the occasions on which they are introduced. For example, the epithet of Apollo, *ἐκβολός*, or "far-shooting," is capable of two explications; one literal in respect to the darts and bow, the ensigns of that god; the other allegorical with regard to the rays of the sun: therefore in such places where Apollo is represented as a god in person, I would use the former interpretation; and where the effects of the sun are described, I would make choice of the latter. Upon the whole, it will be necessary to avoid that perpetual repetition of the same epithets which we find in Homer; and which, though it might be accommodated (as has been already shewn) to the ear of those times, is by no means so to ours: but one may wait for opportunities of placing them, where they derive an additional beauty from the occasions on which they are employed; and in doing this properly, a translator may at once shew his fancy and his judgment.

As for Homer's repetitions, we may divide them into three sorts; of whole narrations and speeches, of single sentences, and of one verse or hemistich. I hope it is not impossible to have such a regard to these, as neither to lose so known a mark of the author on the one hand, nor to offend the reader too much on the other. The repetition is not ungraceful in those speeches, where the dignity of the speaker renders it a sort of insolence to alter his words; as in the messages from gods to men, or from higher powers to inferiors in concerns of state, or where the ceremonial of religion seems to require it, in the solemn

forms of prayer, oaths, or the like. In other cases, I believe, the best rule is, to be guided by the nearness, or distance, at which the repetitions are placed in the original; when they follow too close, one may vary the expression; but it is a question, whether a professed translator be authorized to omit any: if they be tedious, the author is to answer for it.

It only remains to speak of the Versification. Homer (as has been said) is perpetually applying the sound to the sense, and varying it on every new subject. This is indeed one of the most exquisite beauties of poetry, and attainable by very few: I know only of Homer eminent for it in the Greek, and Virgil in Latin. I am sensible it is what may sometimes happen by chance, when a writer is warm, and fully possessed of his image: however it may be reasonably believed they designed this, in whose verse it so manifestly appears in a superior degree to all others. Few readers have the ear to be judges of it; but those who have, will see I have endeavoured at this beauty.

Upon the whole, I must conclude myself utterly incapable of doing justice to Homer. I attempt him in no other hope but that which one may entertain without much vanity, of giving a more tolerable copy of him than any entire translation in verse has yet done. We have only those of Chapman, Hobbes, and Ogilby, Chapman has taken the advantage of an immeasurable length of verse, notwithstanding which, there is scarce any paraphrase more loose and rambling than his. He has frequent interpolations of four or six lines, and I remember one in the thirteenth book of the *Odyssey*, ver. 312, where he has spun twenty verses out of two. He is often mistaken in so bold a manner, that one might think he deviated on purpose, if he did not in other places of his notes insist so much upon verbal trifles. He appears to have had a strong affectation of extracting new meanings out of his author, inasmuch as to promise, in his rhyming preface, a poem of the mysteries he had revealed in Homer: and perhaps he endeavoured to strain the obvious sense to this end. His expression is involved in rustian, a fault for which he was remarkable in his original writings, as in the tragedy of *Bussy d'Amboise*, &c. In a word, the nature of the man may account for his whole performance; for he appears, from his preface and remarks, to

have been of an arrogant turn, and an enthusiast in poetry. His own boast of having finished half the *Iliad* in less than fifteen weeks, shews with what negligence his version was performed. But that which is to be allowed him, and which very much contributed to cover his defects, is a daring fiery spirit which animates his translation, which is something like what one might imagine Homer himself would have writ before he arrived at years of discretion.

Hobbes has given us a correct explanation of the sense in general: but for particulars and circumstances he continually loses them, and often omits the most beautiful. As for its being esteemed a close translation, I doubt not many have been led into that error by the shortness of it, which proceeds not from his following the original line by line, but from the contractions above mentioned. He sometimes omits whole similes and sentences, and is now and then guilty of mistakes, into which no writer of his learning could have fallen, but through carelessness. His poetry, as well as Ogilby's, is too mean for criticism.

It is a great loss to the poetical world that Mr. Dryden did not live to translate the *Iliad*. He has left us only the first book, and a small part of the sixth; in which, if he has in some places not truly interpreted the sense, or preserved the antiquities, it ought to be excused on account of the haste he was obliged to write in. He seems to have had too much regard to Chapman, whose words he sometimes copied, and has unhappily followed him in passages where he wanders from the original. However, had he translated the whole work, I would no more have attempted Homer after him than Virgil, his version of whom (notwithstanding some human errors) is the most noble and spirited translation I know in any language. But the fate of great geniuses is like that of great ministers, though they are confessedly the first in the commonwealth of letters, they must be envied and calumniated only for being at the head of it.

That which, in my opinion, ought to be the endeavour of any one who translates Homer, is above all things to keep alive that spirit and fire which makes his chief character: in particular places, where the sense can bear any doubt, to follow the strongest and most poetical, as most

agreeing

agreeing with that character; to copy him in all the variations of his style, and the different modulations of his numbers; to preserve, in the more active or descriptive parts, a warmth and elevation; in the more sedate or narrative, a plainness and solemnity; in the speeches, a fulness and perspicuity; in the sentences, a shortness and gravity: not to neglect even the little figures and turns on the words, nor sometimes the very cast of the periods, neither to omit nor confound any rites or customs of antiquity: perhaps too he ought to include the whole in a shorter compass than has hitherto been done by any translator, who has tolerably preserved either the sense or poetry. What I would farther recommend to him, is to study his author rather from his own text than from any commentaries, how learned soever, or whatever figure they may make in the estimation of the world; to consider him attentively in comparison with Virgil above all the ancients, and with Milton above all the moderns. Next these, the archbishop of Cambray's *Telemachus* may give him the truest idea of the spirit and turn of our author, and Bossu's admirable treatise of the epic poem the justest notion of his design and conduct. But after all, with whatever judgment and study a man may proceed, or with whatever happiness he may perform such a work, he must hope to please but a few; those only who have at once a taste of poetry, and competent learning. For to satisfy such as want either, is not in the nature of this undertaking; since a mere modern wit can like nothing that is not modern, and a pedant nothing that is not Greek.

What I have done is submitted to the public, from whose opinions I am prepared to learn; though I fear no judges so little as our best poets, who are most sensible of the weight of this task. As for the worst, whatever they shall please to say, they may give me some concern as they are unhappy men, but none as they are malignant writers. I was guided in this translation by judgments very different from theirs, and by persons for whom they can have no kindness, if an old observation be true, that the strongest antipathy in the world is that of fools to men of wit. Mr. Addison was the first whose advice determined me to undertake this task, who was pleased to write to me upon that occasion, in such terms as I cannot repeat without vanity. I was

obliged to Sir Richard Steele for a very early recommendation of my undertaking to the public. Dr. Swift promoted my interest with that warmth with which he always serves his friend. The humanity and frankness of Sir Samuel Garth are what I never knew wanting on any occasion. I must also acknowledge, with infinite pleasure, the many friendly offices, as well as sincere criticisms, of Mr. Congreve, who had led me the way in translating some parts of Homer; as I wish, for the sake of the world, he had prevented me in the rest. I must add the names of Mr. Rowe and Dr. Parnell, though I shall take a farther opportunity of doing justice to the last, whose good-nature (to give it a great panegyric) is no less extensive than his learning. The favour of these gentlemen is not entirely undeserved by one who bears them so true an affection. But what can I say of the honour so many of the great have done me, while the first names of the age appear as my subscribers, and the most distinguished patrons and ornaments of learning as my chief encouragers? Among these, it is a particular pleasure to me to find, that my highest obligations are to such who have done most honour to the name of poet: that his grace the duke of Buckingham was not displeased I should undertake the author, to whom he has given (in his excellent Essay) so complete a praise.

"Read Homer once, and you can read no more;
 "For all books else appear so mean, so poor,
 "Verse will seem Prose; but still persist to read,
 "And Homer will be all the books you need."

That the Earl of Halifax was one of the first to favour me, of whom it is hard to say, whether the advancement of the polite arts is more owing to his generosity or his example. That such a genius as my Lord Bolingbroke, not more distinguished in the great scenes of business than in all the useful and entertaining parts of learning, has not refused to be the critic of these sheets, and the patron of their writer. And that so excellent an imitator of Homer as the noble author of the tragedy of *Heroic Love*, has continued his partiality to me, from my writing *Pastorals*, to my attempting the *Iliad*. I cannot deny myself the pride of confessing, that I have had the advantage not only of their advice for the conduct in general, but their correction of several particulars of this translation.

I could

I could say a great deal of the pleasure of being distinguished by the earl of Carnarvon; but it is almost absurd to particularize any one generous action in a person whose whole life is a continued series of them. Mr. Stanhope, the present secretary of state, will pardon my desire of having it known that he was pleased to promote this affair. The particular zeal of Mr. Harcourt (the son of the late lord chancellor) gave me a proof how much I am honoured in a share of his friendship. I must attribute to the same motive that of several others of my friends, to whom all acknowledgments are rendered unnecessary by the privileges of a familiar correspondence: and I am satisfied I can no better way oblige men of their turn, than by my silence.

In short, I have found more patrons than ever Homer wanted. He would have thought himself happy to have met the same favour at Athens, that has been shown me by its learned rival, the university of Oxford. If my author had the wits of after ages for his defenders, his translator has had the Beauties of the present for his advocates; a pleasure too great to be changed for any fame in reversion. And I can hardly envy him those pompous honours he received after death, when I reflect on the enjoyment of so many agreeable obligations, and easy friendships, which make the satisfaction of life. This distinction is the more to be acknowledged, as it is shewn to one whose pen has never gratified the prejudices of particular parties, or the vanities of particular men. Whatever the success may prove, I shall never repent of an undertaking in which I have experienced the candour and friendship of so many persons of merit; and in which I hope to pass some of those years of youth that are generally lost in a circle of follies, after a manner neither wholly unuseful to others, nor disagreeable to myself. *Pope.*

§ 235. *An Essay on Virgil's Georgics, prefixed to Mr. Dryden's Translation.*

Virgil may be reckoned the first who introduced three new kinds of poetry among the Romans, which he copied after three the greatest masters of Greece. Theocritus and Homer have still disputed for the advantage over him in pastoral and heroics; but I think all are unanimous in giving him the precedence to Hesiod in

his Georgics. The truth of it is, the sweetness and rusticity of a pastoral cannot be so well expressed in any other tongue as in the Greek, when rightly mixed and qualified with the Doric dialect; nor can the majesty of an heroic poem any where appear so well as in this language, which has a natural greatness in it, and can be often rendered more deep and sonorous by the pronunciation of the Ionians. But in the middle style, where the writers in both tongues are on a level, we see how far Virgil has excelled all who have written in the same way with him.

There has been abundance of criticism spent on Virgil's Pastorals and Æneids, but the Georgics are a subject which none of the critics have sufficiently taken into their consideration; most of them passing it over in silence, or casting it under the same head with Pastoral; a division by no means proper, unless we suppose the style of a husbandman ought to be imitated in a Georgic, as that of a shepherd is in Pastoral. But though the scene of both these poems lies in the same place, the speakers in them are of a quite different character, since the precepts of husbandry are not to be delivered with the simplicity of a plowman, but with the address of a poet. No rules therefore that relate to Pastoral can any way affect the Georgics, since they fall under that class of poetry which consists in giving plain and direct instructions to the reader; whether they be moral duties, as those of Theognis and Pythagoras; or philosophical speculations, as those of Aratus and Lucretius; or rules of practice, as those of Hesiod and Virgil. Among these different kinds of subjects, that which the Georgics go upon is, I think, the meanest and least improving, but the most pleasing and delightful. Precepts of morality, besides the natural corruption of our tempers, which makes us averse to them, are so abstracted from ideas of sense, that they seldom give an opportunity for those beautiful descriptions and images which are the spirit and life of poetry. Natural philosophy has indeed sensible objects to work upon, but then it often puzzles the reader with the intricacy of its notions, and perplexes him with the multitude of its disputes. But this kind of poetry I am now speaking of, addresses itself wholly to the imagination; it is altogether conversant among the fields and woods, and has the most delightful part of nature for its province. It raises in

our minds a pleasing variety of scenes and landscapes, whilst it teaches us, and makes the dryest of its precepts look like a description. 'A Georgic therefore is some part of the science of husbandry put into a pleasing dress, and set off with all the beauties and embellishments of poetry.' Now since this science of husbandry is of a very large extent, the poet shews his skill in singling out such precepts to proceed on, as are useful, and at the same time most capable of ornament. Virgil was so well acquainted with this secret, that to set off his first Georgic he has run into a set of precepts, which are almost foreign to his subject, in that beautiful account he gives us of the signs in nature, which precede the changes of the weather.

And if there be so much art in the choice of fit precepts, there is much more required in the treating of them, that they may fall in after each other by a natural unforced method, and shew themselves in the best and most advantageous light. They should all be so finely wrought together in the same piece, that no coarse seam may discover where they join; as in a curious brede of needle-work one colour falls away by such just degrees, and another rises so insensibly, that we see the variety without being able to distinguish the total vanishing of the one from the first appearance of the other. Nor is it sufficient to range and dispose this body of precepts into a clear and easy method, unless they are delivered to us in the most pleasing and agreeable manner; for there are several ways of conveying the same truth to the mind of man; and to choose the pleasantest of these ways, is that which chiefly distinguishes poetry from prose, and makes Virgil's rules of husbandry pleasanter to read than Varro's. Where the prose-writer tells us plainly what ought to be done, the poet often conceals the precept in a description, and represents his countryman performing the action in which he would instruct his reader. Where the one sets out, as fully and distinctly as he can, all the parts of the truth which he would communicate to us; the other singles out the most pleasing circumstance of this truth, and so conveys the whole in a more diverting manner to the understanding. I shall give one instance out of a multitude of this nature that might be found in the Georgics, where the reader may see the different ways Virgil has taken to express the same thing, and how much

pleasanter every manner of expression is, than the plain and direct mention of it would have been. It is in the second Georgic, where he tells us what trees will bear grafting on each other:

Et sæpe alterius ramos impune videmus
Vertere in alterius, mutataque insita mala
Ferre pyrum, et prunis lapidosa rubescere corna.
——Steriles Plataní malos gessere valentes,
Castanea fagos, ornusque incanuit albo
Flore pyri: *Glandemque suæ fregere sub ulmis,*
——Nec longum tempus: & ingens
Exiit ad cælum ramis felicibus arbos;
Miraturque novas frondes et non sua poma.

Here we see the poet considered all the effects of this union between trees of different kinds, and took notice of that effect which had the most surprise, and by consequence the most delight in it, to express the capacity that was in them of being thus united. This way of writing is every where much in use among the poets, and is particularly practised by Virgil, who loves to suggest a truth indirectly, and without giving us a full and open view of it, to let us see just so much as will naturally lead the imagination into all the parts that lie concealed. This is wonderfully diverting to the understanding, thus to receive a precept, that enters, as it were, through a bye-way, and to apprehend an idea that draws a whole train after it. For here the mind, which is always delighted with its own discoveries, only takes the hint from the poet, and seems to work out the rest by the strength of her own faculties.

But since the inculcating precept upon precept, will at length prove tiresome to the reader, if he meets with no entertainment, the poet must take care not to incumber his poem with too much business; but sometimes to relieve the subject with a moral reflection, or let it rest a while, for the sake of a pleasant and pertinent digression. Nor is it sufficient to run out into beautiful and diverting digressions (as it is generally thought) unless they are brought in aptly, and are something of a piece with the main design of the Georgic: for they ought to have a remote alliance at least to the subject, that so the whole poem may be more uniform and agreeable in all its parts. We should never quite lose sight of the country, though we are sometimes entertained with a distant prospect of it. Of this nature are Virgil's descriptions of the original of agriculture, of the fruitfulness of Italy, of a country life,

life, and the like, which are not brought in by force, but naturally rise out of the principal argument and design of the poem. I know no one digression in the Georgics that may seem to contradict this observation, besides that in the latter end of the first book, where the poet launches out into a discourse of the battle of Pharsalia, and the actions of Augustus. But it is worth while to consider, how admirably he has turned the course of his narration into its proper channel, and made his husbandman concerned even in what relates to the battle, in those inimitable lines:

Scilicet et tempus veniet, cum finibus illis
Agricola incurvo terram molitus aratro,
Exca inveniet scabra rubigine pila:
Aut gravibus rastro galeas pulsabit manes,
Grandiaque effosis mirabitur ossa sepulchris.

And afterwards, speaking of Augustus's actions, he still remembers that agriculture ought to be some way hinted at throughout the whole poem:

— Non ullus aratro
Dignus honos: squalent abductis arva colonis:
Et curvæ rigidum falces constantur in infern.

We now come to the style which is proper to a Georgic; and indeed this is the part on which the poet must lay out all his strength, that his words may be warm and glowing, and that every thing he describes may immediately present itself, and rise up to the reader's view. He ought, in particular, to be careful of not letting his subject debase his style, and betray him into a meanness of expression, but every where to keep up his verse, in all the pomp of numbers and dignity of words.

I think nothing which is a phrase or saying in common talk should be admitted into a serious poem; because it takes off from the solemnity of the expression, and gives it too great a turn of familiarity: much less ought the low phrases and terms of art that are adapted to husbandry, have any place in such a work as the Georgic, which is not to appear in the natural simplicity and nakedness of its subject, but in the pleasantest dress that poetry can bestow on it. Thus Virgil, to deviate from the common form of words, would not make use of *tempore* but *sidere* in his first verse; and every where else abounds with metaphors, Grecisms, and circumlocutions, to give his verse the greater pomp, and preserve it from sinking into a plebeian style. And herein consists Virgil's master-piece,

who has not only excelled all other poets, but even himself in the language of his Georgics; where we receive more strong and lively ideas of things from his words, than we could have done from the objects themselves; and find our imaginations more affected by his descriptions, than they would have been by the very sight of what he describes.

I shall now, after this short scheme of rules, consider the different success that Hesiod and Virgil have met with in this kind of poetry, which may give us some further notion of the excellence of the Georgics. To begin with Hesiod; if we may guess at his character from his writings, he had much more of the husbandman than the poet in his temper: he was wonderfully grave, discreet, and frugal: he lived altogether in the country, and was probably, for his great prudence, the oracle of the whole neighbourhood. These principles of good husbandry ran through his works, and directed him to the choice of tillage and merchandize, for the subject of that which is the most celebrated of them. He is every where bent on instruction, avoids all manner of digressions, and does not stir out of the field once in the whole Georgic. His method in describing month after month, with its proper seasons and employments, is too grave and simple; it takes off from the surprise and variety of the poem, and makes the whole look but like a modern almanack in verse. The reader is carried through a course of weather, and may before-hand guess whether he is to meet with snow or rain, clouds or sunshine, in the next description. His descriptions indeed have abundance of nature in them, but then it is nature in her simplicity and undress. Thus when he speaks of January, "The wild beasts," says he, "run shivering through the woods, with their heads stooping to the ground, and their tails clapt between their legs; the goats and oxen are almost flea'd with cold; but it is not so bad with the sheep, because they have a thick coat of wool about them. The old men too are bitterly pinched with the weather; but the young girls feel nothing of it, who sit at home with their mothers by a warm fire-side." Thus does the old gentleman give himself up to a loose kind of tattle, rather than endeavour after a just poetical description. Nor has he shewn more of art or judgment in the precepts he has given us, which are sown so very thick,

thick, that they clog the poem too much, and are often so minute and full of circumstances, that they weaken and unnerve his verse. But after all, we are beholden to him for the first rough sketch of a Georgic: where we may still discover something venerable in the antiqueness of the work; but if we would see the design enlarged, the figures reformed, the colouring laid on, and the whole piece finished, we must expect it from a greater master's hand.

Virgil has drawn out the rules of tillage and planting into two books, which Hesiod has dispatched in half a one; but has so raised the natural rudeness and simplicity of his subject, with such a significance of expression, such a pomp of verse, such variety of transitions, and such a solemn air in his reflections, that if we look on both poets together, we see in one the plainness of a downright countryman, and in the other something of rustic majesty, like that of a Roman dictator at the plow-tail. He delivers the meanest of his precepts with a kind of grandeur; he breaks the clods and tosses the dung about with an air of gracefulness. His prognostications of the weather are taken out of Aratus, where we may see how judiciously he has picked out those that are most proper for his husbandman's observation; how he has enforced the expression, and heightened the images, which he found in the original.

The second book has more wit in it, and a greater boldness in its metaphors, than any of the rest. The poet, with a great beauty, applies oblivion, ignorance, wonder, desire, and the like, to his trees. The last Georgic has indeed as many metaphors, but not so daring as this; for human thoughts and passions may be more naturally ascribed to a bee, than to an inanimate plant. He who reads over the pleasures of a country life, as they are described by Virgil in the latter end of this book, can scarce be of Virgil's mind, in preferring even the life of a philosopher to it.

We may, I think, read the poet's clime in his description; for he seems to have been in a sweat at the writing of it:

— O quis me gelidis sub montibus Hæmi
Sistat, et ingenti ramorum protegat umbra!

And is every where mentioning among his chief pleasures, the coolness of his shades and rivers, vales and grottos; which a more northern poet would have omitted,

for the description of a sunny hill and fire-side.

The third Georgic seems to be the most laboured of them all; there is a wonderful vigour and spirit in the description of the horse and chariot-race. The force of love is represented in noble instances, and very sublime expressions. The Scythian winter-piece appears so very cold and bleak to the eye, that a man can scarce look on it without shivering. The murrain at the end has all the expressiveness that words can give. It was here that the poet strained hard to outdo Lucretius in the description of his plague; and if the reader would see what success he had, he may find it at large in Scaliger.

But Virgil seems no where so well pleased as when he is got among his bees, in the fourth Georgic; and ennobles the actions of so trivial a creature, with metaphors drawn from the most important concerns of mankind. His verses are not in a greater noise and hurry in the battles of Æneas and Turnus, than in the engagement of two swarms. And as in his Æneis he compares the labours of his Trojans to those of bees and pismires, here he compares the labours of the bees to those of the Cyclops. In short, the last Georgic was a good prelude to the Æneis; and very well shewed what the poet could do in the description of what was really great, by his describing the mock grandeur of an insect, with so good a grace. There is more pleasantness in the little platform of a garden, which he gives us about the middle of this book, than in all the spacious walks and water-works of Rapon. The speech of Proteus at the end can never be enough admired, and was indeed very fit to conclude so divine a work.

After this particular account of the beauties in the Georgics, I should in the next place endeavour to point out its imperfections, if it has any. But though I think there are some few parts in it that are not so beautiful as the rest, I shall not presume to name them, as rather suspecting my own judgment, than I can believe a fault to be in that poem, which lay so long under Virgil's correction, and had his last hand put to it. The first Georgic was probably burlesqued in the author's life time; for we still find in the scholiasts a verse that ridicules part of a line translated from Hesiod—*Nudus ara, fere nudus*.—And we may easily guess at the judgment of this extraordinary critic, whoever he

he was, from his censuring in this particular precept. We may be sure Virgil would not have translated it from Hesiod, had he not discovered some beauty in it; and indeed the beauty of it is what I have before observed to be frequently met with in Virgil, the delivering the precept so indirectly, and singling out the particular circumstances of sowing and plowing naked, to suggest to us that these employments are proper only in the hot season of the year.

I shall not here compare the style of the Georgics with that of Lucretius, which the reader may see already done in the preface to the second volume of Dryden's Miscellany Poems; but shall conclude this poem to be the most complete, elaborate, and finished piece of all antiquity. The *Æneis*, indeed, is of a nobler kind; but the Georgic is more perfect in its kind. The *Æneis* has a greater variety of beauties in it, but those of the Georgic are more exquisite. In short, the Georgic has all the perfection that can be expected in a poem written by the greatest poet in the flower of his age, when his invention was ready, his imagination warm, his judgment settled, and all his faculties in their full vigour and maturity. *Addison.*

§ 236. *History of the HEATHEN DEITIES.*

1. **COELUS and TERRA.** Coelus is said to be the son of the Air, great father of the gods, and husband of Terra the daughter of the Earth; by whom he had the Cyclops, Oceanus, Titan, the Hundred Giants, and many other children, the most eminent of which was Saturn.

Nothing is more uncertain than what is related of Coelus and Terra; and the whole fable plainly seems to signify that the Air and Earth were the common father and parent of all created beings. Coelus was called Uranus by the Greeks, and Terra was also named Vesta; she presided over all feasts and banquets; and the first fruits of the earth were offered to her in the most solemn sacrifices. According to the fable, Coelus was dethroned by his youngest son Saturn, and wounded by him, to prevent his having more children.

2. **SATURN.** Saturn was the son of Coelus and Terra, and the most ancient of all the gods. Titan, his elder brother, resigned his birth-right to him, on condition that he should destroy all his male

issue, that the empire of the world might in time fall to his posterity. Saturn accepted of this condition; but Titan afterwards suspecting that his brother had broke the contract between them, made war against him, and kept him in prison; from whence he was released by his son Jupiter, and re-instated in his government: he was afterwards dethroned by Jupiter himself.

Saturn being driven from his throne, left the kingdom, and went into Italy, and there lived with king Janus. That part of Italy where he concealed himself was called Latium.

He is represented as the emblem of Time, with a scythe in his hand; and in his time, it is said, was the golden age of the earth, when the ground yielded all sorts of fruit without culture, and Astræa, or Justice, dwelt among men, who lived together in perfect love and amity.

The Saturnalia, or Feasts of Saturn, were instituted by Tullus king of the Romans; or, according to Livy, by Sempromius and Minutius the consuls.

3. **CYBELE.** Cybele was the wife of Saturn, and accounted mother of the gods: she was called Ops by the Latins, and Rhea by the Greeks. She was also named Bona Mater, Vesta, and Terra.

Cybele hath her head crowned with towers, and is the goddess of cities, garisons, and all things that the earth sustains. She is the earth itself, on which are built many towers and castles.

In her hand she carries a key, because, in winter the earth locks up her treasures; which in the spring she unlooses, brings forth and dispenses with a plentiful hand.

She is seated in a chariot, because the earth hangs in the air, being poised by its own weight. Her garments were painted with flowers of various colours, and figured with images of several creatures; which needs no explanation, since every one knows, that such a dress is suitable to the earth.

Divine honours were daily paid to this goddess; and the priests of Cybele performed their sacrifices with a confused noise of timbrels, pipes, cymbals, and other instruments; and the sacrificants profaned both the temple of their goddess, and the ears of their bearers, with howling, riot, and every kind of wantonness.

The priests of this goddess were called Galli, from a river in Phrygia. They were

were also called Curetes, Corybantes, Telchines, Cabiri, and Idæi Dactyli.

4. JUPITER. Jupiter, son of Saturn and Cybele, or Ops, is the father and king of gods and men. He is represented sitting on a throne of ivory and gold, holding thunder in his right hand, and in the left a scepter made of cyprus; which wood, being free from corruption, is a symbol of eternal empire. On this scepter sits an eagle; either because he was brought up by that bird, or that heretofore the eagle sitting upon his head, portended his reign; or because in the war against the Giants, it brought him the thunder, and thence was called his Armour-bearer. He had golden shoes, and an embroidered cloak, adorned with various flowers, and figures of animals.

He was educated, as well as born, upon Ida, a mountain in Crete; but by whom, the variety of opinions is wonderful.

There are some who affirm, that he was nursed by the Curetes, or Corybantes; some by the Nymphs; and some by Amalthea, daughter of Melissus king of that island. Others, on the contrary, have recorded, that he was fed by the bees with honey; others, by goat's milk.

They add besides, that the goat being dead, and the skin pulled off, Jupiter made of it a shield, called *Ægis*, which he used afterwards in the battle against the Giants.

Jupiter, after he had deposed his father Saturn from the throne, and expelled him the kingdom, divided the parental inheritance with his two brothers, Neptune and Pluto. He so obliged and assisted mankind by great favours, that he not only got the title of Jupiter, but also obtained divine honours, and was esteemed the common father of gods and men.

Jupiter had names almost innumerable; which he obtained, either from the places where he lived, and wherein he was worshipped, or from the various actions of his life.

The Greeks called him Ammon or Hammon, which signifies *sandy*. He obtained this name first in Lybia, where he was worshipped under the figure of a ram; because when Bacchus was athirst in the deserts of Arabia, and implored the assistance of Jupiter, Jupiter appeared in the form of a ram, opened a fountain with his foot, and discovered it to him.

He was called Capitolinus, from the Capitoline hill, on the top whereof he had

the first temple that ever was built in Rome; which Tarquin the Elder first vowed to build, Tarquin the Proud did build, and Horatius the Consul dedicated. He was besides called Tarpeius, from the Tarpeian rock on which this temple was built. He was also styled Optimus Maximus, from his power and willingness to profit all men.

The title of Dodonæus was given Jupiter from the city Dodona in Chaonia, which was so called from Dodona, a nymph of the sea. Near to this city was a grove sacred to him, which was planted with oaks, and famous, because in it was the most ancient oracle of all Greece.

The name Feretrius was given him, because after the Romans had overcome their enemies they carried the imperial spoils (*Spolia Opima*) to his temple. Romulus first presented such spoils to Jupiter, after he had slain Acron, king of Cæcina; and Cornelius Gallus offered the same spoils, after he had conquered Tolumnius, king of Hetruria; and, thirdly, M. Marcellus, when he had vanquished Viridomarus, king of the Gauls.

Those spoils were called *Opima*, which one general took from the other in battle.

He is also named Olympius from Olympus, the name of the master who taught him, and of the heaven wherein he resides.

The Greeks called him *Σωτήρ* (*Soter*) Servator, the Saviour, because he delivered them from the Medes.

He was likewise called Xenius, or Hospitalis; because he was thought the author of the laws and customs concerning hospitality.

5. JUNO. Juno was the Queen of Heaven, both the sister and wife of Jupiter; the daughter of Saturn and Ops; born in the island Samos, where she lived while she continued a virgin.

Juno became extremely jealous of Jupiter, and never ceased to perplex the children he had by his mistresses. She was mother of Vulcan, Mars, and Hebe; she was also called Lucina, and presided over marriages and births; and is represented in a chariot drawn by peacocks, with a scepter in her right hand, and a crown on her head; her person was august, her carriage noble, and her dress elegant and neat.

Iris, the daughter of Thaumas and Electra, was servant and peculiar messenger of Juno.

Juno. Because of her swiftness, she is painted with wings, sitting on a rainbow. It was her office to unloose the souls of dying women from the chains of the body.

6. APOLLO. Apollo is described as a beardless youth, with long hair, crowned with laurel, and shining in an embroidered vestment; holding a bow and arrows in his right hand, and a harp in the left. Sometimes he is seen with a shield in the one hand, and the Graces in the other. The power of this god is threefold: in heaven, where he is called Sol; in earth, where he is named Liber Pater; and in hell, where he is styled Apollo. He generally is painted with a harp, shield, and arrows.

He was the son of Jupiter and Latona. His mother, who was the daughter of Cæus the Titan, conceived twins by Jupiter: at which Juno being incensed, sent the serpent Python against her; Latona, to avoid the intended mischief, fled into the island Delos, where she brought forth Apollo and Diana at the same birth.

By the invention of physic, music, poetry, and rhetoric, he deservedly presided over the Muses. He also taught the arts of foretelling and archery; by which he so much obliged mankind, that he was enrolled in the number of the gods.

He destroyed all the Cyclops, the forgers of Jupiter's thunderbolts, with his arrows, to revenge the death of his son Æsculapius, whom Jupiter had killed with his thunder, because, by the power of physic, he restored the dead to life again.

He fell violently in love with the virgin Daphne, so famous for her modesty. When he pursued her she was changed into a laurel, the most chaste of trees; which is never corrupted with the violence of heat or cold, but remains always flourishing, always pure.

Apollo raised the walls of the city of Troy by the music of his harp alone; and was challenged by Marsyas, a proud musician; but the god slayed him alive, because he presumed to contend with him in his own art, and afterwards turned him into a river. Also when Midas, king of Phrygia, foolishly determined the victory to the god Pan, when Apollo and he sang together, Apollo stretched his ears to the length and shape of asses ears.

This god had many names. He is

called Cynthius, from the mountain Cynthus in the island of Delos; from whence Diana is also called Cynthia; and Delius, from the same island, because he was born there.

He is called Delphicus, from the city Delphi in Bœotia, where he had the most famous temple in the world. They say, that this famous oracle became dumb at the birth of our Saviour; and when Augustus desired to know the reason of its silence, the oracle answered him, That, in Judæa, a child was born, who was the Supreme God, and had commanded him to depart, and return no more answers.

He is called Pæan, either from allaying sorrows, or from his exact skill in hunting, wherefore he is armed with arrows.

He is called Phœbus, from the swiftness of his motion, or from his method of healing by purging.

He was named Pythius, not only from the serpent Python, which he had killed, but likewise from asking and consulting; for none among the gods delivered more responses than he; especially in the temple which he had at Delphi, to which all nations resorted, so that it was called the oracle of all the earth. These oracles were given out by a young virgin, called Pythia from Pythius, one of Apollo's names.

7. SOL. Sol, who enlighteneth the world, is esteemed the same as Apollo. He was the father of Phæton by Clymene; and, as a proof of his paternal affection, promised to grant his son whatever he should request. The rash youth asked the guidance of his chariot for one day: Sol in vain used every argument to dissuade him from the enterprize; but having sworn by the river Styx, an oath it was unlawful for the gods to violate, unwillingly granted his request, and gave him the necessary instructions for his behaviour.

Phæton, transported with joy, mounted the chariot, and began to lash the flaming steeds; but they finding the ignorance of their new driver, ran through the air, and set both heaven and earth on fire. Jupiter, to prevent a total conflagration, struck Phæton with thunder from his chariot, and plunged him into the river Po. His sisters, Phæthusa, Lampetia, and Phœbe, and also Cynus his friend, immoderately bewailed his death on the banks of the river;

river; and, by the pity of the gods, his sisters were changed into poplar trees, and his friend Cynus into a swan.

8. **MERCURY.** Mercury, son of Jupiter and Maia, daughter of Atlas, was the god of eloquence and merchandize, and messenger of the gods.

He is represented a young man, with a cheerful countenance, an honest look, and lively eyes; fair without paint, with winged shoes and hat, and holding in his hand a winged rod, bound about with two serpents.

He had many remarkable qualities, on account of which they worshipped him as a god. He is said to have invented letters, and the use of them; it is evident, that he excelled in eloquence, and the faculty of speaking; and therefore was accounted the god of rhetoric and oratory. He is reported to have been the first inventor of contracts, weights, and measures: he also taught the arts of buying, selling, and traffic; and thence was called the god of merchants, and of gain.

In the art of thieving, he far exceeded all the sharpers that ever have been, and is named the Prince and God of Tricking. The very day in which he was born, he stole away the cows of king Admetus, though attended by Apollo himself; who, while he complained of the theft, and bent his bow with an intent of revenge, found himself robbed of his quiver and arrows also.

He was a wonderful master at making peace; and pacified not only mortals, but also the gods themselves, when they quarrelled. This faculty is signified by the rod which he holds in his hand, and which formerly he got from Apollo, to whom he had before given a harp.

He had divers offices: the chief were, to carry the commands of Jupiter; also to attend persons dying, to unloose their souls from the chains of the body, and carry them down to hell: likewise to revive, and replace into new bodies, those that had already completed their time in the Elysian fields.

9. **MARS.** Mars, the son of Jupiter and Juno, or, as is related by Ovid, of Juno only, who conceived him by the touch of a flower shewed her by Flora.

Mars is the god of war, fierce in aspect, stern in countenance, and terrible in dress: he sits in a chariot drawn by two horses,

which are driven by a distracted woman. He is covered with armour, and brandishes a spear in his right hand. Sometimes he is represented sitting on horseback, formidable with his whip and spear, with a cock near him, the emblem of watchfulness.

His servants are Fear and Terror. Discord also goes before in a tattered garment, and Clamour and Anger follow him.

Bellona, goddess of war, is the companion of Mars, or, according to others, his sister or wife. She prepares for him his chariot and horses, when he goes to battle.

His name, Mars, sets forth the power and influence he has in war, where he presides over the soldiers.

He is called Gradivus, from his stateliness in marching, or from his vigour in brandishing his spear.

He is called Quirinus from Quiris, or Quiris, signifying a spear. This name was afterwards attributed to Romulus, who, with Remus, was esteemed the son of Mars; from whom the Romans were called Quirites.

10. **BACCHUS.** Bacchus was son of Jupiter and Semele, and is said to have been nourished by Jupiter in his thigh on the death of his mother. As soon as he was born, he was committed to the care of Silenus and the Nymphs, to be brought up; and, in reward for their service, the Nymphs were received into heaven, and there changed into stars called the Hyades.

Bacchus is a filthy, shameful, and immodest god; with a body naked, red face, lascivious look, swollen cheeks and belly, dispirited with luxury, and intoxicated with wine.

He is crowned with ivy and vine-leaves, and in his hand holds a thyrsus for a scepter. His chariot is drawn sometimes by tygers and lions, sometimes by lynxes and panthers: a drunken band of Satyrs, Demons, and Nymphs, presiding over the wine-presses, fairies of the fountains, and priestesses, attend him as his guard, and old Silenus, riding on an ass, brings up the rear.

Bacchus invented so many things useful to mankind, either in finishing controversies, building cities, enacting laws, or obtaining victories, that for this reason he was admitted into the council of the gods.

gods, by the joint suffrages of the whole world.

He first planted the vine and drank the juice of the grape; the tillage of the ground, and making honey, are attributed to Bacchus: when he was king of Phœnicia, he instructed his subjects in trade and navigation. He promoted society amongst men, and brought them over to religion and the knowledge of the gods.

He subdued the Indians, and many other nations, and triumphed in a chariot drawn by tygers. Riding on an elephant, he travelled Ægypt, Syria, Phrygia, and all the East, gained many and great victories, and there erected pillars, as Hercules did in the West.

He had various names: he was called Bromius, from the crackling of fire, and noise of thunder, that was heard when his mother was killed in the embraces of Jupiter.

Bimater, because he had two mothers.

Evius, or Evous; for in the war with the Giants, when Jupiter did not see Bacchus, he thought that he was killed; and cried out, *Alas, Son!* Or, because when he found that Bacchus had overcome the Giants, by changing himself into a lion, he cried out again, *Well done, Son!*

Evan, from the acclamations of the Bacchantes, who were therefore called Evantes.

Eleleus and Eleus, from the acclamation wherewith they animated the soldiers before the fight, or encouraged them in the battle itself. The same acclamation was also used in celebrating the Orgia, which were sacrifices offered up to Bacchus.

Iacchus was also one of the names given to Bacchus, from the noise which men when drunk make.

Liber, and Liber Pater, from *libero*, as in Greek they call him *Ἐλευθερίος* [*Eleutherios*] the Deliverer.

Also Lenæus, and Lyæus; for wine frees the mind from cares, and those who have drank plentifully, speak too often whatsoever comes into their minds.

11. MINERVA. Minerva, or Pallas, the goddess of wisdom, war, arts, and sciences, was the daughter of Jupiter; who finding no likelihood of having children by Juno, it is said, desired Vulcan to strike his forehead with his hammer; and, after three months, he brought forth Mi-

nerva. She was called Minerva, as some say, from the threats of her stern and fierce look. Instead of a woman's dress, she is arrayed in armour; wears a golden head-piece, and on it glittering crests; a brazen coat of mail covers her breast; she brandishes a lance in her right hand, and in her left holds a shield, whereon is painted the grisly head of Medusa, one of the Gorgons, rough and formidable with snakes.

Upon the head of this goddess there was an olive crown, which is the symbol of peace; either because war is only made that peace may follow; or because she taught men the use of that tree.

There were five Minervas; but that one, to whom the rest are referred, was descended of Jupiter. For he, as some say, finding that his wife was barren, through grief struck his forehead, and brought forth Minerva.

This goddess, like Vesta and Diana, was a perpetual virgin; and so great a lover of chastity, that she deprived Tiresias of his eyes, because he saw her bathing in the fountain of Helicon.

Minerva was the inventress of divers arts, especially of spinning; and therefore the distaff is ascribed to her.

The Athenians were much devoted to her worship; and she had been adored by that people before Athens itself was built. The Rhodians also paid great honour to this goddess. She was extremely jealous lest any one should excel her in any art; and near her are placed divers mathematical instruments, as goddesses of arts and sciences. The cock and the owl are sacred to her; the first being expressive of courage and watchfulness, and the latter the emblem of caution and foresight.

Minerva represents wisdom, that is, useful knowledge, joined with discreet practice; and comprehends the understanding of the most noble arts, together with all the virtues, but more especially that of chastity. Her birth from Jupiter's head, is most certainly an emblem, that all human arts and sciences are the production of the mind of man, directed by superior wisdom.

12. VENUS. Venus is said to be the daughter of Jupiter and Dione. She is styled the goddesses of the Graces, Eloquence, Beauty, Neatness, and Cheerfulness; in her countenance many charms

She

She is clothed with a purple mantle glittering with diamonds, and refulgent with a rosy crown; she breathes pleasures, and flows in softness. Two Cupids attend at her sides, the Graces stand round her, and the lovely Adonis follows after, gently holding up her train. Her chariot is of ivory, finely carved, beautifully painted and gilt, fashioned in form of a shell, and drawn by swans, doves, and swallows, or sometimes by sparrows, as the directs, when she pleases to mount it.

She is said to have sprung from the froth of the sea; and, being laid in a shell, as it were in a cradle, to have been driven by Zephyrus upon the island of Cyprus, where the Horæ received her, cherished her in their bosoms, educated, and adorned her; and when she was grown up, they carried her into heaven, and presented her to the gods, who, being taken with her beauty, all strove to marry her; but at last she was betrothed to Vulcan, to whom afterwards she was given in wedlock.

The first of Venus's companions was Hymenæus, the god of marriage, and protector of virgins. Maids newly married offered sacrifices to him, as also to the goddess Concordia.

Cupid, the god of love, was the next of Venus's companions. She also passionately loved Adonis, a beautiful youth.

The poets speak of two Cupids; one of which is an ingenious youth, the son of Jupiter and Venus, a celestial deity; the other a debauchee, son of Nox and Erebus, whose companions are Drunkenness, Sorrow, Enmity, Contention, and other plagues of that kind.

The Graces, called Charities, were three sisters, daughters of Jupiter and Eurynome, or Venus.—These will be more particularly mentioned in a future place.

Venus was worshipped under various names: Cypris and Cypria, Cytheris and Cytherea, from the islands of Cyprus and Cythera, whither she was first carried in a sea-shell.

Erycina, from the mountain Eryx, in the island of Sicily; upon which Æneas built a splendid and famous temple to her honour, because she was his mother.

Idalia and Acidalia, from the mountain Idalus, in the island Cyprus, and the fountain Acidalius, in Boeotia.

Marina, because she was born of the sea, and begotten of the froth of the waters.

From thence she is called Aphroditis and

Anadyomene, that is, *emerging out of the waters*, as Apelles painted her.

She is called Paphia, from the city Paphos in the island of Cyprus, where they sacrificed flowers and frankincense to her: also the Lesbian Queen, from Lesbos, in the same island.

On a dispute at a feast of the gods, between Juno, Pallas, and Venus, for the pre-eminence of beauty, Jupiter, not being able to bring them to an agreement, referred the decision to Paris, a shepherd on Mount Ida, with direction that a golden apple should be given to the fairest. Paris determined the prize in favour of Venus, and assigned to her the golden reward. Venus, in return for this singular regard to her, promised Paris Helena, the fairest beauty in the world. Paris sailed into Greece with a great fleet, and brought away Helen, who had been betrothed to Menelaus, king of Sparta; but he being then absent, Paris carried her away with him to Troy, which brought on the famous siege of that city, as is related in the Grecian History.

[These were the principal, or first class of Deities in the Heathen Mythology; the *Dii Majores*, to whom the highest degree of worship was paid; as it was universally imagined, that these deities were more eminently employed in the government of the world, and presided over the immediate concerns of mankind.

Vulcan, Neptune, Pluto, and some others, are also esteemed principal Deities; but mention will be made of these as they occur in the several orders or ranks of Terrestrial, Marine, and Infernal Deities.]

I. TERRESTRIAL.

1. TITAN. Titan, the elder brother of Saturn, though not a god, claims the first place, being the elder son of Cælus and Terra; and, on an agreement with Jupiter his younger brother, he yielded to him his birthright, as is before mentioned. His sons were the Giants, called from him Titans.

2. VESTA. Vesta, the eldest of all the goddesses, the mother of Saturn, and the wife of Cælus, is represented as a matron sitting and holding a drum. She is not reckoned among the Celestials, she being the Earth herself. Vesta is her name

from cloathing, because the earth is cloathed with plants and fruits. She sits, because the earth being immoveable, rests in the lowest part of the world. She carries a drum, because the earth contains the boisterous winds in its bosom.

Her head is also surrounded with divers flowers and plants, voluntarily weaving themselves into a crown, while animals of every kind play about, and fawn upon her. By reason the earth is round, Vesta's temple at Rome was built round; and they say, that her image was orbicular in some places.

It is no wonder that the first oblations were offered to her, since all the sacrifices spring from the earth; and the Greeks both began and concluded all sacrifices with this goddess.

3. **VULCAN.** Vulcan, the husband of Venus, was son of Jupiter and Juno (some say of Juno only); but, being born deformed, he was cast down from heaven by Jupiter as soon as he was born, and in the fall broke his leg. He was the god of subterraneous fires, and presided over metals.

He first made his addresses to Minerva, and was refused by her: he afterwards married Venus, but that goddess disregarded him for his deformity.

Vulcan made the chariot of the sun, and supplied Jupiter with thunder: he fixed his forges on Mount *Ætna*, but chiefly in the island *Lemnos*, where he worked for the gods, and taught the natives the art of working iron by fire. His forgers were the Cyclops, who were represented as having only one eye, in the middle of their foreheads. Apollo, it is said, slew them all, for having forged the thunder with which Jupiter struck *Æsculapius*, the god of physic. The principal temple of Vulcan was on Mount *Ætna*; and he is painted with a hat of blue colour, the symbol of fire.

He was called *Malciber*, or *Multifer*, from his softening and polishing iron.

4. **JANUS.** Janus was the son of *Cœlus* and *Hecate*. He had a double face and forehead in one and the same head; hence he was called the two-faced god; and therefore is said to see things placed behind his back, as well as before his face. In his right hand he holds a key, and in his left a rod; and beneath his feet are twelve altars.

He had several temples built and de-

icated to him, some of which had double doors, others four gates; because he was sometimes represented with four faces.

It was a custom among the Romans, that, in his temple, the consuls were inaugurated, and from thence said to open the year on the kalends of January, when new laurel was put on the statue of the god. The temple of Janus was held in great veneration by the Romans, and was kept open in the time of war, and shut in the time of peace; and it is remarkable, that, within the space of seven hundred years, this temple was shut only thrice: once by *Numa*; afterwards by the consuls *Marcus Atilius* and *Titus Manlius*, after a league struck up with the Carthagenians; and, lastly, by *Augustus*, after the victory of *Actium*.

5. **LATONA.** Latona was the daughter of *Phœbe*, and *Cœus* the Titan; whom, for her great beauty, Jupiter loved and deflowered.

When Juno perceived her with child, she cast her out of heaven to the earth, having first obliged *Terra* to swear, that she would not give her any where an habitation to bring forth her young: and besides, she sent the serpent *Python* to persecute the harlot all over the world. But in vain; for in the island *Delos*, under a palm or an olive-tree, Latona brought forth *Diana* and *Apollo*.

6. **DIANA.** Diana, goddess of hunting, was the daughter of *Ceres* and *Jupiter*, and sister of *Apollo*. She is usually painted in a hunting habit, with a bow in her hand, a quiver full of arrows hanging down from her shoulders, and her breast covered with the skin of a deer: she was the goddess of hunting and chastity.

She has three different names, and as many offices: in the heavens she is called *Luna* and *Phœbe*, on the earth *Diana*, and in hell *Hecate*. In the heavens she enlightens all things by her rays; on the earth she subdues all the wild beasts by her bow and darts; and in hell keeps in subjection the ghosts and spirits, by her power and authority.

Diana was exposed by her mother in the streets, and was nourished by shepherds: for which reason, she was worshipped in the streets; and her statue usually set before the doors of the houses.

Many temples were erected to this goddess, of which, that of *Ephesus* was the chief.

chief. The woods, groves, and forests, were also consecrated to her.

Actæon, grandson of Cadmus, a famous hunter, introducing himself into the privacy of Diana, whilst she was bathing in a fountain, the goddess changed him into a stag, and he was devoured by his dogs.

7. **AURORA.** Aurora was the daughter of Terra and Titan, the sister of the sun and moon, and mother of all the stars.

She sits high in a golden chariot, drawn by white horses. She was much taken with the love of Cephalus, a very beautiful youth; and when she could by no persuasion move him to violate his faith, plighted to his wife Procris, daughter of the king of Athens, she carried him up into heaven by force.

Aurora being also charmed with the singular beauty of Tithonus, son of Laomedon, and brother of Priamus, carried him up into heaven, joined him to herself in wedlock, and from the Fates obtained immortality for him instead of a portion.

Memnon was the son of this marriage, who, when he came to Troy, to bring assistance to Priamus, fighting in a single combat with Achilles, was slain.

8. **CERES.** Ceres is represented as a lady, tall in stature, venerable with majesty, beautified with yellow hair, and crowned with a turban composed of the ears of corn. She holds in her right hand a burning torch, and, in her left, a handful of poppies and ears of corn.

She was daughter of Saturn and Ops, and of so great beauty, that she drew the gods into the love and admiration of her person.

She first invented and taught the art of tilling the earth, of sowing pulse and corn, and of making bread; whereas before men ate only acorns. As soon as agriculture was introduced, and men began to contend about the limits of those fields, which before were common and uncultivated, she enacted laws, and determined the rights and properties of each person when disputes arose.

Ceres is beautiful, because the earth, which she resembles, gives a very delightful and beautiful spectacle to beholders: especially when it is arrayed with plants, diversified with trees, adorned with flowers, enriched with fruits, and covered with green herbs; when it displays the honours of the

Spring, and pours forth the gifts of Autumn with a bountiful hand.

She holds a lighted torch, because when Proserpine was stolen away by Pluto, the lighted torches with the flames of mount Ætna, and with them sought her daughter through the whole world. She also carries poppies, because when spent with grief, and could not obtain the least rest or sleep, Jupiter gave her poppies to eat, which plant, they say, has a power of creating sleep and forgetfulness.

Among various nations, the first fruits of the earth were offered to Ceres, as goddess of corn and agriculture; and the Cerealia, or Mysteries instituted in honour of Ceres, both in Greece and Sicily, were of two sorts: the greater, or chief, were peculiar to Ceres, and called Eleusinia, from Eleusis, a city of Attica; and, in the lesser, sacrifices were made also to Proserpine.

In these feasts, the votaries ran through the public streets with great noise and lamentation, carrying lighted torches in their hands, in representation of the search made by Ceres after her daughter, when stolen by Pluto.

II. MARINE DEITIES.

1. **NEPTUNE.** Neptune was the son of Saturn and Ops, and brother of Jupiter and Pluto. His mother preserved him from the devouring jaws of his father, who ate up all the male children, and conveyed him to shepherds to be brought up as is before mentioned. In the division of his father's dominions by Jupiter, the empire of the sea was allotted to Neptune.

He having joined with Apollo in a conspiracy against Jupiter, they were both driven from heaven; and, by Jupiter's command, forced to serve Laomedon in building the walls of Troy. Neptune, not receiving the reward of his service, sent a sea-monster on the coasts, which ravaged the country.

Neptune afterwards became charmed with the beauty of Amphitrite, and long bore her disdain; at last, by the assistance of a Dolphin, and the power of flattery, he drew her into marriage. Neptune, as an acknowledgment for this kindness, placed the dolphin among the stars, and he became a constellation.

As to the actions of this god; the poets say, that in a dispute with Minerva, who should give a name to Athens, the capital city of Greece, he struck the ground with

his trident, and produced a horse; for which reason the Athenians sacrificed to him that animal. Neptune was called Poseidon by the Greeks: the Romans gave him also the name of Confus, and erected an altar to him in the circus of Rome. The Circensian games, or horse-races, instituted in honour of him, were, from this name, called Confualia. In these games, which were celebrated in the months of February and July, the rape of the Sabine virgins was represented.

Neptune is esteemed governor of the sea, and father of the rivers and fountains. He is represented riding on the sea in a car, in the form of a shell, drawn by sea-horses, preceded by Tritons. He holds a trident in his hand, as an emblem of his sovereignty, and is attended by the younger Tritons, and sea-nymphs.

The other DEITIES are,

1. *Oceanus*, a marine deity, descended from Cælus and Vesta; and by the ancients was called, not only the father of rivers, but also of animals, and of the gods themselves.

2. *Thetis*, goddess of the sea, wife of Oceanus, by whom she is said to have had many sons; the chief of whom was Nereus, who dwelt in the Ægean sea, and by his wife Doris had fifty daughters, called from him Nereides. Thetis is represented sitting in a chariot, in the form of a shell, drawn by dolphins.

3. *Amphitrite*, daughter of Oceanus and Doris, goddess of the sea, and wife of Neptune. She is by the poets frequently taken for the sea itself; and by some writers, Thetis and Amphitrite are said to be the same person.

4. *Triton*, the son of Neptune and Amphitrite, was also his companion and trumpeter. In the upper part of his body he bears the resemblance of a man, and of a fish in the lower part. Most of the sea-gods from him are called Tritons.

5. The *Sirens* were inhabitants of the sea. They had faces of women, but the bodies of flying fish. Their names were Parthenope, Ligæa, and Leucosia. These dwelt near the coast of Sicily, and drew to them all passengers by the sweetness of their singing, and then devoured them.

III. INFERNAL DEITIES.

1. *PLUTO*. Pluto, son of Saturn and Rhea, and brother of Jupiter and Nep-

tune. In the division of his father's kingdom, when he was dethroned by Jupiter, Pluto had the western parts assigned to him, which gave rise to the poetical fable, that he was the god of hell.

These infernal kingdoms are attributed to him, not only because the western part of the world fell to him by lot; but also because he introduced the use of burying and funeral obsequies: hence he is believed to exercise a sovereignty over the dead. He sits on a dark throne, holding a key instead of a sceptre, and wearing a crown of ebony. Sometimes he is crowned with a diadem, sometimes with cypress, and sometimes with the daffodil, which flower Proserpine was gathering when he stole her away. He is called Dis by the Latins, and Hades by the Greeks, which last signifies dark and gloomy. His horses and chariot are of a black colour; and himself is often painted with a rod in his hand for a sceptre, and covered with a head-piece.

2. *PROSERPINE*. Proserpine is queen of hell, the infernal Juno, and wife of Pluto. She was daughter of Jupiter and Ceres.

When none of the goddesses would marry Pluto, because of his deformity, the god being vexed that he was despised, and forced to live a single life, in a rage mounted his chariot, and suddenly sprung up from a den in Sicily amongst a company of very beautiful virgins, who were gathering flowers in the fields of Enna. Pluto, inflamed with the love of Proserpine, carried her off with him, and sunk into the earth, not far from Syracuse, where suddenly a lake arose.

The nymphs, her companions, being struck with terror, acquainted her mother with the loss of her daughter. Ceres, with lighted torches from Mount Ætna, long sought her in vain: but at last, being informed by the nymph Arethusa, that she was stolen by Pluto, she went down into hell, where she found Proserpine queen of those dark dominions. The enraged mother complained to Jupiter of the violence offered to her daughter by his brother Pluto. Jupiter promised that she should return to the earth, provided she had eat nothing in hell: hereupon Ceres went down rejoicing; and Proserpine was returning with transport, when Ascalaphus declared, that he saw Proserpine eat some grains of a pomegranate which she gathered in Plu-

to's

to's orchard: by this discovery her return was stopped. The mother, incensed at this intelligence, changed Ascalaphus into an owl; and, by her importunate intreaty, extorted from Jupiter, that Proserpine should live one half of the year with her, and the rest of the time with her husband Pluto. Proserpine afterwards so loved this disagreeable husband, that she became jealous of him, and changed his mistress Mentha into the herb named Mint.

The other DEITIES are,

1. *Plutus*, either from the affinity of the name, or that both were gods of riches, is frequently joined to Pluto. He was said to be blind, void of judgment, and of a nature quite timorous, all which qualities denote some peculiar property of this god: blind, and void of judgment, in the unequal distribution of riches, as he frequently passes by good men, whilst the wicked are loaded with wealth; and timorous, by reason the rich are constantly in fear, and watch over their treasures with great care and anxiety.

2. *Nox*, goddess of darkness, is the most ancient of all the goddesses. She married the river Erebus in hell, by whom she had many daughters. Nox is painted in black robes beset with stars.

3. *Charon*, the son of Erebus and Nox, is the ferryman of hell. He is represented by the poets as a terrible, grim, dirty old fellow. According to the fable, he attended with his boat, and, for a small piece of money, carried over the river Styx the souls of the dead; yet not all promiscuously, but only those whose bodies were committed to the grave; for the unburied shades wandered about the shores an hundred years, and then were admitted into the boat, and ferried over the lake.

4. The *Giants* or *Titans* were at first inhabitants of the earth; who, trusting to their great stature and strength, waged war against Jupiter, and attempted to dethrone him from the possession of heaven. In this battle, they heaped up mountains upon mountains, and from thence darted trees of fire into heaven. They hurled also prodigious stones and solid rocks, which falling again upon the earth, or in the sea, became mountains or islands; but being unsuccessful in their attempt, and destroyed by the thunder of Jupiter, with the assistance of the other gods, they were driven from the earth and cast into hell.

5. The *Fates* were three in number,

daughters of Erebus and Nox. These were said to preside over time past, present, and to come. Their names are Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos. Their office is to superintend the thread of life; Clotho holds the distaff, and draws the thread, Lachesis turns the spindle, and Atropos cuts the thread with her scissors; that is, the first calls us into life, the second determines our lot and condition, and the third finishes our life.

6. The *Furies*, or *Eumenides*, were daughters of Nox and Acheron. They were three, namely, Alesto, Megara, Tisiphone: their abode was in hell, to torment the wicked; they were armed with blazing torches, and surrounded with snakes, and other instruments of horror.

The RIVERS of HELL were,

1. *Acheron*, Son of Sol and Terra. He supplied the Titans with water when they waged war against Jupiter; who for this reason, changed him into a river, and cast him into hell. The waters of this river are extremely muddy and bitter.

2. *Styx*, the principal river of hell; and held in so great veneration by the gods, that whoever broke the oath he had once made by this river, was deprived of his divinity for one hundred years.

3. *Cocytus*. This river is increased by the tears of the wicked; and flows with a lamentable noise, imitating the damned.

4. *Phlegethon*. This river swells with fiery waves, and rolls streams of fire. The souls of the dead, having passed over these rivers, are carried to Pluto's palace.

5. *Lethe* is a river in hell. If the ghosts of the dead drink the waters of this river, they are said to lose the remembrance of all that had passed in this world.

[It may here be very properly observed, that these infernal regions, the residence of Pluto, are said to be a subterraneous cavern, whither the shades or souls of mortals descended, and were judged by Minos, Æacus, and Rhadamanthus, appointed by Pluto judges of hell. This place contained Tartarus, the abode of the unhappy; also Elysium, the abode of those that had lived well. Cerberus, a dog with three heads, was door-keeper, and covered with serpents, always waited at the infernal gate, to prevent mortals from entering, or the manes or shades from going out. Charon

as is said before, was ferryman of hell, and conducted the departed souls to the tribunal of Minos. The Harpies, or birds of prey, were also inhabitants of hell. There were indifferently called Furia, Ocypete, and Lamia; and were instruments in the hands of the gods to raise wars in the world, and disturb the peace of mankind.]

Fable relates two remarkable punishments in hell. 1. Ixion, for attempting to seduce Juno, was by Jupiter cast into hell, and condemned to be chained to a wheel, which continually whirled round. 2. Sisyphus, the son of Æolus, was doomed in hell to roll a huge round stone from the bottom to the top of a mountain, whence it immediately descended. This punishment was allotted him, because he revealed the secrets of the gods, and discovered to Asopus the place where Jupiter had concealed his daughter Ægina.

INFERIOR DEITIES.

In the Heathen Mythology, there are many other deities or gods of inferior note, styled *Dii Minores*; and as these frequently occur in the writings of the poets, it is necessary to make brief mention of them.

The *MUSES*, daughters of Jupiter and Mnemosyne, goddesses of memory, were the reputed goddesses of the several arts and sciences, and presided over the feasts and solemnities of the gods. They were the companions of Apollo, and inhabited with him chiefly on the hills of Parnassus, Helicon, and Pindus. The Hippocrene, and other fountains at the foot of Parnassus, were sacred to them; as were also the palm-tree and the laurel. They are represented young and very handsome, and are nine in number.

1. *Clio* is said to be the chief muse. She derives her name from glory and renown. She presided over history, and is said to be the inventress of the lute.

2. *Calliope*, so called from the sweetness of her voice. She presided over eloquence and heroic poetry.

3. *Erato*, or the lovely. She presided over lyric poetry.

4. *Thalia*, from the gaiety and pleasantry of her songs, called the Flourishing Maid. She invented comedy and geometry.

5. *Melpomene* was the muse of that age,

She presided over tragedy, and melancholy subjects.

6. *Terpsichore*, or the Jovial. She presided over music and dancing.

7. *Euterpe*, so called because she imparts joy. She invented the flute, and presided over music: she is also said to be the patroness of logic.

8. *Polyhymnia*, so called from multiplicity of songs. She is said to excel in memory, and preside over history.

9. *Urania*, or, the Celestial Muse. She presided over divine poetry, and is said to be the inventress of astronomy.

The Muses are distinguished by masks, lyres, garlands, globes, and other emblems, expressive of their different offices or accomplishments.

PEGASUS, the famous horse of ancient fable, was an attendant on Apollo and the Muses; he inhabited the hills of Parnassus, Helicon, and other mountains. He is said to be sprung from the blood of Medusa, killed by Perseus, and is represented by the poets with wings to his sides, expressive of the flights and elevation of the mind in poetry. When Perseus cut off the head of Medusa, the horse Pegasus struck the ground with his foot; upon which, at the bottom of the hill, a fountain arose named Hippocrene. This fountain was sacred to Apollo and the Muses.

The *GRACES*, called also Charities, were three sisters, daughters of Jupiter and Eurynome, or Venus. The first was named Aglaia from her cheerfulness; the second Thalia from her perpetual verdure; and the third Euphrosyne, from delight. They were companions of the Muses and Mercury, and attendants on Venus. They are represented with pleasing countenances and naked, to denote that our actions should be free and candid, not covered over with dissimulation or deceit. A chain binds their arms together, to express that the link of love and harmony should be united and unbroken.

THEMIS, *ASTREA*, and *NEMESIS*, were three goddesses: the first of law and peace; the second of justice; and the third, a rewarder of virtue, and punisher of vice.

ÆOLUS, god of the winds, and son of Jupiter and Aesta.

MOMUS, son of Nox and Somnus, and god of banter or jesting.

PAN, son of Mercury and Penelope, was the god of the woods and shepherds. He is represented half man, and half goat, with

with a large pair of horns on his head, a crook in one hand, a pipe, composed of reeds, in the other. The Arcadians much admired his musick, and paid him divine honours. The Romans also built a temple to Pan, at the foot of Mount Palatine, and his feasts were called Lupercalia. Sylvanus and Faunus were also gods of the forests, from whom were descended the other rural deities, as Satyrs, Sylvens, Fauns, Nymphs, or Dryades, who were all inhabitants of the woods.

PALES is the goddess of the shepherds and pasture, and by some is called Magna Mater and Vesta. They offered to her milk and wafers of millet for a good growth of pasture. Her feasts, Palilia, were celebrated about the eleventh or twelfth of the kalends of May, on which day Romulus founded the city of Rome.

FLORA, goddess of the spring and flowers, and wife of Zephyrus. She is represented adorned with garlands, and near her is a basket of flowers. Feronia is also counted the goddess of groves and orchards.

POMONA was goddess of the gardens, and all fruit-trees and plants. She was beloved of Vertumnus, as Ovid relates.

PRIAPUS, son of Venus and Bacchus, an obscene deity. He also presided over gardens.

TERMINUS was a deity who presided over the boundaries of lands, which were held so sacred, that whoever removed a land-mark, or ploughed them up, was subject to death. On the last day of the year, the Romans offered sacrifice to the god Terminus; and these festivals were called Terminalia.

CUPID, god of love, son of Mars and Venus, is represented blind, with a bow in his hand, and a quiver of arrows on his shoulders, with which he wounds the hearts of lovers.

HYMENÆUS, or Hymen, son of Apollo and Urania, or, as some say, of Bacchus and Venus. He is the god of marriage; and is represented under the figure of a young man, holding a torch in his hand, with a crown of roses, or sweet marjoram, on his head.

The PENATES and LARES were also deemed gods; the first presided over provinces and kingdoms, and the latter over houses and particular families. The Lares also presided over the highways; and they were wont to sacrifice to these household gods, frankincense, wine, bread, corn, and

a cock; and, according to some writers, a lamb and a hog.

The GENII also were spirits, or deities, that presided over all persons and places. And indeed so great were the number of these inferior gods, that the ancient mythology furnished almost as many deities as there are things in nature; for there was no part of the body, or action of life, but had a peculiar divinity, by whom it was said to be immediately directed or protected.

ÆSCULAPIUS, son of Apollo and the nymph Coronis, was the god of physic: he was slain by Jupiter with a thunderbolt forged by the Cyclops, on the complaint of Pluto, for raising the dead, or rather recovering men, by his skill in medicine, from their sickness. He was worshipped under the figure of a serpent; and sometimes he is represented seated on a throne of gold and ivory, with a long beard, holding a rod environed with a serpent, and a dog at his feet.

The CYCLOPS, four in number, were sons of Neptune and Amphitrite. They were servants to Vulcan, and had only one eye, placed in the middle of their foreheads: they were slain by Apollo, in revenge for forging the thunderbolts with which Jupiter killed Æsculapius, as is before related. They inhabited the island of Sicily; and, on account of their great strength, were deemed giants by the poets.

SILENUS was the foster-father of Bacchus. He is accounted the god of abstruse mysteries and knowledge. He is represented as a fat, old, drunken fellow, riding on an ass.

ÆGYPTIAN DEITIES.

OSIRUS, Apis, and Serapis, are different names of one and the same deity, son of Jupiter by Niobe, and husband to Io, daughter of Inachus and Ismena. Jupiter became passionately in love with Io; and in order to pursue his unlawful passion, changed her into a cow. Io, to avoid the resentment of Juno, fled into Egypt; and Osirus, after he had reigned many years over the Argives in Peloponnesus, left his kingdom to his brother Ægialus, and sailed into Egypt to seek new dominions. He there married Io, who was also named Isis; and, obtaining the government, they taught the Egyptians husbandry, also every other useful art and science, and governed with great wisdom and equity.

Osiris, having conferred the greatest

benefits

benefits on his own subjects, committed the regency of his kingdom to Isis; and, with a large body of forces, set out in order to civilize the rest of mankind. This he performed more by the power of persuasion, and the soothing arts of music and poetry, than by the terror of his arms. He marched first into Æthiopia, thence to Arabia and India; and, returning to Egypt, was slain by his brother Typhon, and buried at Memphis, the chief city of Egypt.

Isis afterwards vanquished Typhon, resigned happily in Egypt to her death, and was also buried at Memphis.

ORUS, son of Osiris and Isis, succeeded to the government. The Egyptians deemed him the protector of the river Nile, the avenger of evils, governor of the world, and the author of plenty.

These deities of the Egyptians were held in the greatest veneration. Temples were erected, and divine honours paid to Osiris under the figure of an ox; and the priestesses of Isis sacrificed to that goddess under different shapes, according to the purposes for which they were intended. And, as fable is said to take its origin from the Egyptians, it will appear, from their intercourse with the Jews long resident in Egypt, that a mixture of true religion and error increased that false worship, which first prevailed in that country, and afterwards spread into Rome, and the more distant parts of the world. These gods of the Egyptians were worshipped under various names and characters, according to the prevailing opinion of different countries, or some other incident. Thus, according to Herodotus, Osiris and Bacchus are the same; according to Diodorus the historian, Osiris is Sol, Jupiter, &c. and Plutarch says, Osiris, Serapis, and Apis of the Egyptians, are Pluto, Oceanus, &c. in the Roman mythology.

Isis is said to be the same with the Roman Cybele, Ceres, Minerva, Luna, &c. and was called the mother of the gods. Orus also was the symbol of light, and was figured as a winged boy. He was named the Hermes of the Greeks, and the Apollo and Cupid of the Romans.

Both in Egypt and Rome, each deity had his peculiar temple, where the most solemn sacrifices were made to them, according to the prevailing notion of their power and influence. The worship of these gods so far prevailed among the Romans, that they erected to their honour

a public edifice named the Pantheon, in which, as a general repository, were placed the statues of their several deities, with their respective symbols: Jupiter was distinguished by a thunderbolt; Juno by a crown; Mars by a helmet; Apollo, or the Sun, by its beams; Diana, or the Moon, by a crescent; Ceres by a cornucopia, or horn of plenty, or an ear of corn; Cupid by a bundle of arrows; Mercury by wings on his feet, and a caduceus, or wand, in his hand; Bacchus by the ivy; Venus by the beauty of her person; and the rest had the like distinguishing characters placed above their statues, or in their hands, according to the received opinion of the people, or the ingenuity of the artist.

OF ORACLES.

The ORACLES of the ancients were deemed the predictions, mysterious declarations of the will of the gods: it may, with a kind of certainty, be admitted, that the natural bent of the mind of man to search into futurity gave rise to this institution.

To whatever cause, however, the origin may be ascribed, the institution of oracles became general, among the idolatrous nations, and increased over the face of the whole earth. Not to mention other nations, the oracles of the Egyptians and Greeks were numerous, especially of the latter people, at least we have a more full account of them. The oracle of Dodona, a city of Epirus in Greece, was sacred to Jupiter; the oracle of Jupiter Hammond was also of ancient date, and famous in Lybia; the oracle of Apollo at Heliopolis was of great note; the oracle also of Apollo at Delphi, if not the most ancient, was the most celebrated of all Greece, inasmuch that it was called the oracle of the whole earth. And, indeed, so established was the credit of these oracular declarations, that the enacting laws, the reformation of government, also peace or war, were not undertaken by states or princes, but even in the more common concerns of life, no material business was entered upon without the sanction of the oracle. Each oracle had its priest, or priestess, who delivered out the answers of the gods. These answers, for the most part, were in verse, and couched under such mysterious terms, that they admitted of a double interpretation; inasmuch, that whether the prediction was completed, or the expectation of the supplicant disappointed, the oracle was

clear

clear from blame. The oracle of Apollo at Delphos, being in the greatest reputation, was resorted to from all parts. The priestess of Apollo was named Pythia, from the serpent Python, killed by that god, as is before mentioned. The offerings to the gods on these applications were liberal, according to the ability, or the importance of the answer required by the supplicant; and, it is said, the temple and city of Delphos especially, was, by these means, filled with immense treasure.

The principal oracle of the Egyptians was at Memphis, a royal city of Egypt, where they erected an altar, and worshipped their god Apis, under the figure of an ox. His wife Isis had also worship, and her priests were called Isiaci.

THE SYBILLINE ORACLES were certain women, whom the ancients believed to be endued with the gift of prophecy. They are said to be ten in number, and were famous in all lands. They had no fixed residence, but travelled into different countries, and delivered their predictions in verse in the Greek tongue. One of these Sybils, named Erythraea, or Cumæa, from Cuma, a city in the Ionian sea, according to Virgil, came into Italy, and was held in the highest esteem by the Romans, who consulted the oracle of the Sybil on all occasions that related to the welfare of the republic.

AUGURY, or the art of divination by birds, the meteors of the heavens, or the entrails of beasts, was held in the highest veneration by the idolatrous nations. The people of God, the Jews, were not free from idolatry in the time of Moses; and we read also in holy writ, that Saul, being vexed in spirit, applied to the seers, or persons skilled in the knowledge of futurity. But not to go so far back, Romulus and Remus consulted the Auguries before they built Rome; and the foundation of that city was determined by the flight of birds. Numa established a college of Augurs, and confirmed his regulation of the Roman state by their sanction. It appears also, in the history of that people, that no national concern was entered upon, without first consulting the Auguries; and, according to the propitious or bad omen, they made peace or war, and appointed magistrates. Indeed the Augurs, and their declarations, were held in so high regard by the Romans, that whoever contemned them was accounted impious and pro-

phane. To conclude, divination, or the spirit of prediction, made a considerable part of the Pagan theology, especially among the Romans, those lords of the world, who fell into the general delusion, and adopted almost all the gods of every people they subdued.

CONCLUSION. *Of fabulous History.*

Notwithstanding the origin of fable seems uncertain, and to be lost in antiquity, it may be said to take its rise from truth, or sacred history. And in the foregoing relation of the Heathen deities, it is evident, many particulars correspond with the history of the most early transactions, as they are recorded by Moses in holy writ. The golden age of Saturn, the wars of the Giants, the deluge of Deucalion, and the re-peopling of the earth, declare their origin from divine truth, as received and delivered down by the patriarchs.

On the confusion of tongues at the building of Babel, and the dispersion of mankind, the tradition of the patriarchs became subject to variation; and, as is observed by the learned Rollin, the change of habitation, and diversity of language, opened the door of error, and introduced an alteration in worship, agreeable to the soil, or rather according to the humour, or some accidental event of the respective colonies.

However confused and erroneous the general worship of man became, it is evident, from every circumstance, that, in the first ages of the world, mankind knew but one Deity, the SUPREME GOD, and Creator of the universe; but afterwards, when men abandoned themselves to vice, and, as is said in Scripture, "went a whoring after their own inventions," and departed from the purity of their forefathers, their ideas of the Divinity became weakened, and instead of the worship of the only TRUE GOD, they substituted other deities, or objects of worship, more agreeable to the comprehension of their own depraved nature. Thus, by a mixture of truth and fable, one deity became productive of another, till at last the inventive fancy gradually gave life to every visible object, both in the heavens, and on earth. Thus, "having changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things, and serving the creature more than the Creator," not only Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and other

other false deities, but stars, rivers, and fountains, animals, reptiles, and plants, received divine adoration. At length, great men and heroes, who excelled in any useful science, or became famous by conquests, or a superior conduct of life, by an easy transition from admiration to a superstitious respect, were deemed more than human, and had divine honours paid to them also under different names, in different countries; or, probably, prompted by ambition, they assumed to themselves the homage and adoration that was due only to the Divine Creator, the ALMIGHTY LORD, and Governor of the world. This accounts for that multitude of deities, both in heaven and on earth, which makes the marvellous part of ancient fiction, and became the object of Pagan divinity, when the earth was overwhelmed with darkness, and, as is expressed in holy writ, "the hearts of men went after their idols."

The fertile imagination of the poets, who celebrated the exploits of the ancient heroes, and expressed the common actions of life in figurative characters, joined to the extravagance of priests and orators in their panegyrics on the living and the dead, greatly forwarded the work of fable: and in time, learning being obliterated, their writings were looked upon as registers of facts. Thus the world, grown old in error, by the folly and credulity of mankind, fiction got admission into history, and became at last a necessary part in composing the annals of the early ages of the world.

For this cause, an acquaintance with fabulous history, as is before observed, is become a necessary part of polite learning in the education of youth, and for the due understanding the Greek and Roman authors; also the paintings, statues and other monuments of antiquity. By this knowledge, the tender mind will moreover be inspired with an early abhorrence of the absurd ceremonies and impious tenets of the Heathen mythology; and, at the same time, be impressed with the deepest sense and veneration for the Christian religion, the light of the Gospel in CHRIST JESUS, who, in the fulness of time, through the tender mercies of God, dispelled those clouds of darkness, ignorance and folly, which had long debased human nature, and spread over the face of the earth the greatest and most absurd superstitions, as is before related, and will farther appear

from many incidents in the histories of Greece and Rome.

§ 237. *Concerning the Neglect of Oratorical Numbers.—Observations upon Dr. TILLOTSON'S Style.—The Care of the ancient Orators with respect to Numerous Composition, stated and recommended. In a Letter.*

The passage you quote is entirely in my sentiments. I agree with that celebrated author and yourself, that our oratory is by no means in a state of perfection; and, though it has much strength and solidity, that it may yet be rendered far more polished and affecting. The growth, indeed, of eloquence, even in those countries where she flourished most, has ever been exceedingly slow. Athens had been in possession of all the other polite improvements, long before her pretensions to the persuasive arts were in any degree considerable; as the earliest orator of note among the Romans did not appear sooner than about a century before Tully.

That great master of persuasion, taking notice of this remarkable circumstance, assigns it as an evidence of the superior difficulty of his favourite art. Possibly there may be some truth in the observation: but whatever the cause be, the fact, I believe, is undeniable. Accordingly eloquence has by no means made equal advances, in our own country, with her sister arts; and though we have seen some excellent poets, and a few good painters, rise up amongst us, yet I know not whether our nation can supply us with a single orator of deserved eminence. One cannot but be surprised at this, when it is considered, that we have a profession set apart for the purposes of persuasion, and which not only affords the most animating and interesting topics of rhetoric, but wherein a talent of this kind would prove the likeliest, perhaps, of any other, to obtain those ambitious prizes which were thought to contribute so much to the successful progress of ancient eloquence.

Among the principal defects of our English orators, their general disregard of harmony has, I think, been the least observed. It would be injustice indeed to deny that we have some performances of this kind amongst us tolerably musical: but it must be acknowledged at the same time, that it is more the effect of accident than design, and rather a proof of the power of our language, than of the art of our orators.

Dr.

Dr. Tillotson, who is frequently mentioned as having carried this species of eloquence to its highest perfection, seems to have had no sort of notion of rhetorical numbers: and may I venture to add, without hazarding the imputation of an affected singularity, that I think no man had ever less pretensions to genuine oratory than this celebrated preacher? If any thing could raise a flame of eloquence in the breast of an orator, there is no occasion upon which one should imagine it would be more likely to break out, than in celebrating departed merit; yet the two sermons which he preached on the death of Mr. Gouge and Dr. Whichcote, are as cold and languid performances as were ever, perhaps, produced upon such an animating subject. One cannot indeed but regret, that he, who abounds with such noble and generous sentiments, should want the art of setting them off with all the advantage they deserve; that the sublime in morals should not be attended with a suitable elevation of language. The truth however is, his words are frequently ill-chosen, and almost always ill-placed: his periods are both tedious and unharmonious; as his metaphors are generally mean, and often ridiculous. It were easy to produce numberless instances in support of this assertion. Thus, in his sermon preached before queen Anne, when she was princess of Denmark, he talks of squeezing a parable, thrusting religion by, driving a strict bargain with God, sharking shifts, &c.; and, speaking of the day of judgment, he describes the world as cracking about our ears. I cannot however but acknowledge, in justice to the oratorical character of this most valuable prelate, that there is a noble simplicity, in some few of his sermons; as his excellent discourse on sincerity deserves to be mentioned with particular applause.

But to show his deficiency in the article I am considering at present, the following stricture will be sufficient, among many others that might be cited to the same purpose. "One might be apt," says he, "to think, at first view, that this parable was over-done, and wanted something of a due decorum; it being hardly credible, that a man, after he had been so mercifully and generously dealt withal, as upon his humble request to have so huge a debt so freely forgiven, should, whilst the memory of so much mercy was fresh upon him, even in the very next moment handle his fellow-servant,

"who had made the same humble request to him which he had done to his lord, with so much roughness and cruelty, for so inconsiderable a sum."

This whole period (not to mention other objections which might justly be raised against it) is unmusical throughout; but the concluding members, which ought to have been particularly flowing, are most miserably loose and disjointed. If the delicacy of Tully's ear was so exquisitely refined, as not always to be satisfied even when he read Demosthenes; how would it have been offended at the harshness and dissonance of so unharmonious a sentence!

Nothing, perhaps, throws our eloquence at a greater distance from that of the ancients, than this Gothic arrangement; as those wonderful effects, which sometimes attended their elocution, were in all probability, chiefly owing to their skill in musical concords. It was by the charm of numbers, united with the strength of reason, that Tully confounded the audacious Cataline, and silenced the eloquent Hortensius. It was this that deprived Cæsar of all power of recollection, when he rose up to oppose that great master of enchanting rhetoric: it was this, in a word, made even Cæsar himself tremble; nay, what is yet more extraordinary, made Cæsar alter his determined purpose, and acquit the man he had resolved to condemn.

You will not suspect that I attribute too much to the power of numerous composition, when you recollect the instance which Tully produces of its wonderful effect. He informs us, you may remember, in one of his rhetorical treatises, that he was himself a witness of its influence, as Carbo was once haranguing to the people. When that orator pronounced the following sentence, *Patris dictum sapiens, temeritas filii comprobavit*, it was astonishing, says he, to observe the general applause which followed that harmonious close. A modern ear, perhaps, would not be much affected upon this occasion: and, indeed, it is more than probable, that we are ignorant of the art of pronouncing that period with its genuine emphasis and cadence. We are, certain, however, that the music of it consisted in the dichoree with which it is terminated: for Cicero himself assures us, that if the final measure had been changed, and the words placed in a different order, their whole effect would have been absolutely destroyed.

This art was first introduced among the Greeks

Greeks by Thrasymachus, though some of the admirers of Isocrates attributed the invention to that orator. It does not appear to have been observed by the Romans till near the time of Tully, and even then it was by no means universally received. The ancient and less numerous manner of composition had still many admirers, who were such enthusiasts to antiquity as to adopt her very defects. A disposition of the same kind may, perhaps, prevent its being received with us; and while the archbishop shall maintain his authority as an orator, it is not to be expected that any great advancement will be made in this species of eloquence. That strength of understanding likewise, and solidity of reason, which is so eminently our national characteristic, may add somewhat to the difficulty of reconciling us to a study of this kind; as at first glance it may seem to lead an orator from his grand and principal aim, and tempt him to make a sacrifice of sense to sound. It must be acknowledged, indeed, that in the times which succeeded the dissolution of the Roman republic, this art was so perverted from its true end, as to become the single study of their enervated orators. Pliny the younger often complains of this contemptible affectation; and the polite author of that elegant dialogue, which, with very little probability, is attributed either to Tacitus or Quintilian, assures us it was the ridiculous boast of certain orators, in the time of the declension of genuine eloquence, that their harangues were capable of being set to music, and sung upon the stage. But it must be remembered, that the true end of this art I am recommending, is to aid, not to supersede reason; that it is so far from being necessarily effeminate, that it not only adds grace but strength to the powers of persuasion. For this purpose Tully and Quintilian, those great masters of numerous composition, have laid it down as a fixed and invariable rule, that it must never appear the effect of labour in the orator; that the tuneful flow of his periods must always seem the casual result of their disposition; and that it is the highest offence against the art, to weaken the expression, in order to give a more musical tone to the cadence. In short, that no unmeaning words are to be thrown in merely to fill up the requisite measure; but that they must still rise in sense as they improve in sound.

Fitzosborne.

§ 238. *Upon Grace in Writing. In a Letter.*

When I mentioned Grace as essential in constituting a fine writer, I rather hoped to have found my sentiments reflected back with a clearer light by yours, than imagined you would have called upon me to explain in form, what I only threw out by accident. To confess the truth, I know not whether, after all that can be said to illustrate this uncommon quality, it must not at last be resolved into the poet's *nequeo monstrare et sentio tantum*. In cases of this kind, where language does not supply us with proper words to express the notions of one's mind, we can only convey our sentiments in figurative terms: a defect which necessarily introduces some obscurity.

I will not, therefore, undertake to mark out with any sort of precision, that idea which I would express by the word Grace: and, perhaps, it can no more be clearly described than justly defined. To give you, however, a general intimation of what I mean when I apply that term to compositions of genius, I would resemble it to that easy air which so remarkably distinguishes certain persons of a genteel and liberal cast. It consists not only in the particular beauty of single parts, but arises from the general symmetry and construction of the whole. An author may be just in his sentiments, lively in his figures, and clear in his expression; yet may have no claim to be admitted into the rank of finished writers. Those several members must be so agreeably united as mutually to reflect beauty upon each other; their arrangement must be so happily disposed as not to admit of the least transposition without manifest prejudice to the entire piece. The thoughts, the metaphors, the allusions, and the diction, should appear easy and natural, and seem to arise like so many spontaneous productions, rather than as the effects of art or labour.

Whatever, therefore, is forced or affected in the sentiments; whatever is pompous or pedantic in the expression, is the very reverse of Grace. Her mien is neither that of a prude nor a coquet: she is regular without formality, and sprightly without being fantastical. Grace, in short, is to good writing what a proper light is to a fine picture; it not only shews all the figures in their several proportions and relations, but shews them in the most advantageous manner.

Aa

As gentility (to resume my former illustration) appears in the minutest action, and improves the most inconsiderable gesture; so Grace is discovered in the placing even a single word, or the turn of a mere expletive. Neither is this inexpressible quality confined to one species of composition only, but extends to all the various kinds; to the humble pastoral as well as to the lofty epic; from the slightest letter to the most solemn discourse.

I know not whether Sir William Temple may not be considered as the first of our prose authors, who introduced a graceful manner into our language. At least that quality does not seem to have appeared early, or spread far, amongst us. But wheresoever we may look for its origin, it is certainly to be found in its highest perfection in the essays of a gentlemen whose writings will be distinguished so long as politeness and good-sense have any admirers. That becoming air which Tully esteemed the criterion of fine composition, and which every reader, he says, imagines so easy to be imitated, yet will find so difficult to attain, is the prevailing characteristic of all that excellent author's most elegant performances. In a word, one may justly apply to him what Plato in his allegorical language, says of Aristophanes; that the Graces, having searched all the world round for a temple wherein they might for ever dwell, settled at last in the breast of Mr. Addison.

Fitzosborne.

§ 239. *Concerning the Style of HORACE, in his Moral Writings. In a Letter.*

Are you aware how far I may mislead you, when you are willing to resign yourself to my guidance, through the regions of criticism? Remember, however, that I take the lead in these paths, not in confidence of my own superior knowledge of them, but in compliance with a request, which I never yet knew how to refuse. In short, I give you my sentiments, because it is my sentiments you require: but I give them at the same time rather as doubts than decisions.

After having thus acknowledged my insufficiency for the office you have assigned me, I will venture to confess, that the poet who has gained over your approbation, has been far less successful with mine. I have ever thought, with a very celebrated modern writer, that

Le vers le mieux rempli, la plus noble pensée,
Ne peut plaire à l'esprit quand l'oreille est blessée.

BOILEAU.

Thus, though I admit there is both wit in the raillery, and strength in the sentiments of your friend's moral epistle, it by no means falls in with those notions I have formed to myself, concerning the essential requisites in compositions of this kind. He seems, indeed, to have widely deviated from the model he professes to have had in view, and is no more like Horace, than Hyperion to a Satyr. His deficiency in point of versification, not to mention his want of elegance in the general manner of his poem, is sufficient to destroy the pretended resemblance. Nothing, in truth, can be more absurd, than to write in poetical measure, and yet neglect harmony; as, of all the kinds of false style, that which is neither prose nor verse, but I know not what inartificial combination of powerless words bordered with rhyme, is far, surely, the most insufferable.

But you are of opinion, I perceive (and it is an opinion in which you are not singular) that a negligence of this kind may be justified by the authority of the Roman satirist: yet surely those who entertain that notion, have not thoroughly attended either to the precepts or the practice of Horace. He has attributed, I confess, his satirical composition to the inspiration of a certain Muse, whom he distinguishes by the title of the *musa pedestris*: and it is this expression which seems to have misled the generality of his imitators. But though he will not allow her to fly, he by no means intends she should creep: on the contrary, it may be said of the Muse of Horace, as of the Eve of Milton, that

—grace is in all her steps.

That this was the idea which Horace himself had of her, is evident, not only from the general air which prevails in his Satires and Epistles, but from several express declarations, which he lets fall in his progress through them. Even when he speaks of her in his greatest fits of modesty, and describes her as exhibited in his own moral writings, he particularly insists upon the ease and harmony of her motions. Though he humbly disclaims, indeed, all pretensions to the higher poetry, the *acer spiritus et vis*, as he calls it; he represents his style as being governed by the *temperata certa modoque*, as flowing with a certain regular and agreeable cadence. Accordingly, we find him particularly condemning his predecessor Lucilius for the dissonance of his numbers; and he professes to have made the experiment, whether the same kind

kind of moral subjects might not be treated in more soft and easy measures :

Quid vetat et nosmet Lucili scripta legentes,
Quæreret num illius, num rerum dura negarit
Versiculos natura magis factos et euntes
Mollius ?

The truth is, a tuneful cadence is the single prerogative of poetry, which he pretends to claim to his writings of this kind ; and so far is he from thinking it unessential, that he acknowledges it as the only separation which distinguishes them from prose. If that were once to be broken down, and the musical order of his words destroyed, there would not he tells us, be the least appearance of poetry remaining.

Non

Invenias etiam disiecti membra poetæ.

However, when he delivers himself in this humble strain, he is not, you will observe, sketching out a plan of this species of poetry in general ; but speaking merely of his own performances in particular. His demands rise much higher, when he informs us what he expects of those who would succeed in compositions of this moral kind. He then not only requires flowing numbers but an expression concise and unincumbered ; wit exerted with good-breeding, and managed with reserve ; as upon some occasions the sentiments may be enforced with all the strength of eloquence and poetry : and though in some parts the piece may appear with a more serious and solemn cast of colouring, yet, upon the whole, he tells us it must be lively and *vivacious*. This I take to be his meaning in the following passage :

Est brevitate opus, ut currat sententia, neu se
Impediat verbis lassas onerantibus aures ;
Et sermone opus est modo rhetoris atque poetæ ;
Interdum urbani, parentis viribus atque
Extenuantis eas consulto.

Such, then, was the notion which Horace had of this kind of writing. And if there is any propriety in these his rules, if they are founded on the truth of taste and art ; I fear the performance in question, with numberless others of the same stamp (which have not however wanted admirers) must inevitably stand condemned. The truth of it is, most of the pieces which are usually produced upon this plan, rather give one an image of Lucilius, than of Horace : the authors of them seem to mistake the awkward negligence of the favourite of Scipio, for the easy air of the friend of Mæcenas,

You will still tell me, perhaps, that the example of Horace himself is an unanswerable objection to the notion I have embraced ; as there are numberless lines in his Satires and Epistles, where the versification is evidently neglected. But are you sure, Hortensius, that those lines which sound so unharmonious to a modern ear, had the same effect upon a Roman one ? For myself, at least, I am much inclined to believe the contrary : and it seems highly incredible, that he who had ventured to censure Lucilius for the uncouthness of his numbers, should himself be notoriously guilty of the very fault against which he so strongly exclaims. Most certain it is, that the delicacy of the ancients with respect to numbers, was far superior to any thing that modern taste can pretend to ; and that they discovered differences which are to us absolutely imperceptible. To mention only one remarkable instance ; a very ancient writer has observed upon the following verse in Virgil,

Arma virumque cano, Trojæ qui primus ab oris.
that if instead of *primus* we were to pronounce it *primis* (*is* being long, and *us* short) the entire harmony of the line would be destroyed.—But whose ear is now so exquisitely sensible, as to perceive the distinction between those two quantities ? Some refinement of this kind might probably give music to those lines in Horace, which now seem so untuneable.

In subjects of this nature it is not possible, perhaps, to express one's ideas in any very precise and determinate manner, I will only therefore in general observe, with respect to the requisite style of these performances, that it consists in a natural ease of expression, an elegant familiarity of phrase, which though formed of the most usual terms of language, has yet a grace and energy, no less striking than that of a more elevated diction. There is a certain lively colouring peculiar to compositions in this way, which, without being so bright and glowing as is necessary for the higher poetry, is nevertheless equally removed from whatever appears harsh and dry. But particular instances will, perhaps, better illustrate my meaning, than any thing I can farther say to explain it. There is scarce a line in the Moral Epistles of Mr. Pope, which might not be produced for this purpose. I chuse however to lay before you the following verses, not as preferring them to many others which might be quoted from

from that inimitable satirist; but as they afford me an opportunity of comparing them with a version of the same original lines, of which they are an imitation; and, by that means, of shewing you at one view what I conceive is, and is not, in the true manner of Horace:

Peace is my dear delight—not Fleury's more;
But touch me, and no minister so fore:
Whoe'er offends, at some unlucky time,
Slides into verse, and hitches in a rhyme;
Sacred to ridicule his whole life long,
And the sad burden of some merry song.

I will refer you to your own memory for the Latin passage, from whence Mr. Pope has taken the general hint of these verses; and content myself with adding a translation of the lines from Horace by another hand:

Behold me blameless bard, how fond of peace!
But he who hurts me (nay, I will be heard)
Had better take a lion by the beard;
His eyes shall weep the folly of his tongue,
By laughing crowds in rueful ballad sung.

There is a strength and spirit in the former of these passages, and a flatness and languor in the latter, which cannot fail of being discovered by every reader of the least delicacy of discernment; and yet the words which compose them both are equally sounding and significant. The rules then, which I just now mentioned from Horace, will point out the real cause of the different effects which these two passages produce in our minds; as the passages themselves will serve to confirm the truth and justice of the rules. In the lines of Mr. Pope, one of the principal beauties will be found to consist in the shortness of the expression; whereas the sentiments in the other are too much incumbered with words. Thus for instance,

Peace is my dear delight,
is pleasing, because it is concise; as,

Behold me blameless bard, how fond of peace!
is, in comparison of the former, the *verba lassas onerantia aures*. Another distinguishing perfection in the imitator of Horace, is that spirit of gaiety which he has diffused through these lines, not to mention those happy, though familiar, images of *sliding* into verse, and *hitching* in rhyme; which can never be sufficiently admired. But the translator, on the contrary, has cast too serious an air over his numbers, and appears with an emotion and earnestness that disappoints the force of his satire:

Nay, I will be heard,

has the mien of a man in a passion; and

His eyes shall weep the folly of his tongue,

though a good line in itself, is much too solemn and tragical for the undisturbed pleasantry of Horace.

But I need not enter more minutely into an examination of these passages. The general hints I have thrown out in this letter will suffice to shew you wherein I imagine the true manner of Horace consists. And after all, perhaps, it can no more be explained, than acquired, by rules of art. It is what true genius can only execute, and just taste alone discover. *Fitzosborne.*

§ 240. Concerning the Criterion of Taste.
In a Letter.

It is well, my friend, that the age of transformation is no more: otherwise I should tremble for your severe attack upon the Muses, and expect to see the story of your metamorphosis embellish the poetical miracles of some modern Ovid. But it is long since the fate of the Piérides has gained any credit in the world, and you may now, in full security, condemn the divinities of Parnassus, and speak irreverently of the daughters of Jove himself. You see, nevertheless, how highly the Ancients conceived of them, when they thus represented them as the offspring of the great father of gods and men. You reject, I know, this article of the heathen creed: but I may venture, however, to assert, that philosophy will confirm what fable has thus invented, and that the Muses are, in strict truth, of heavenly extraction.

The charms of the fine arts are, indeed, literally derived from the Author of all nature, and founded in the original frame and constitution of the human mind. Accordingly, the general principles of taste are common to our whole species, and arise from that internal sense of beauty which every man, in some degree at least, evidently possesses. No rational mind can be so wholly void of all perceptions of this sort, as to be capable of contemplating the various objects that surround him, with one equal coldness and indifference. There are certain forms which must necessarily fill the soul with agreeable ideas; and she is instantly determined in her approbation of them, previous to all reasonings concerning their use and convenience. It is upon these general principles, that what is called fine taste in the arts is founded; and consequently is by no means so precarious and

unsettled an idea as you chuse to describe it. The truth is, taste is nothing more than this universal sense of beauty, rendered more exquisite by genius, and more correct by cultivation: and it is from the simple and original ideas of this sort, that the mind learns to form her judgment of the higher and more complex kinds. Accordingly, the whole circle of the imitative and oratorical arts is governed by the same general rules of criticism; and to prove the certainty of these with respect to any one of them, is to establish their validity with regard to all the rest. I will therefore consider the Criterion of Taste in relation only to fine writing.

Each species of composition has its distinct perfections: and it would require a much larger compass than a letter affords, to prove their respective beauties to be derived from truth and nature; and consequently reducible to a regular and precise standard. I will only mention therefore those general properties which are essential to them all, and without which they must necessarily be defective in their several kinds. These, I think, may be comprehended under uniformity in the design, variety and resemblance in the metaphors and similitudes, together with propriety and harmony in the diction. Now, some or all of these qualities constantly attend our ideas of beauty, and necessarily raise that agreeable perception of the mind, in what object soever they appear. The charms of fine composition then, are so far from existing only in the heated imagination of an enthusiastic admirer, that they result from the constitution of nature herself. And perhaps the principles of criticism are as certain and indisputable, even as those of the mathematics. Thus, for instance, that order is preferable to confusion, that harmony is more pleasing than dissonance, with some few other axioms upon which the science is built; are truths which strike at once upon the mind with the same force of conviction, as that the whole is greater than any of its parts, or, that if from equals you take away equals, the remainder will be equal. And in both cases, the propositions which rest upon these plain and obvious maxims, seem equally capable of the same evidence of demonstration.

But as every intellectual, as well as animal, faculty is improved and strengthened by exercise; the more the soul exerts this her internal sense of beauty upon any par-

ticular object, the more she will enlarge and refine her relish for that peculiar species. For this reason the works of those great masters, whose performances have been long and generally admired, supply a farther criterion of fine taste, equally fixed and certain as that which is immediately derived from Nature herself. The truth is, fine writing is only the art of raising agreeable sensations of the intellectual kind; and, therefore, as by examining those original forms which are adapted to awaken this perception in the mind, we learn what those qualities are which constitute beauty in general; so by observing the peculiar construction of those compositions of genius which have always pleased, we perfect our idea of fine writing in particular. It is this united approbation, in persons of different ages and of various characters and languages, that Longinus has made the test of the true sublime; and he might with equal justice have extended the same criterion to all the inferior excellencies of elegant composition. Thus the deference paid to the performances of the great masters of antiquity, is fixed upon just and solid reasons: it is not because Aristotle and Horace have given us the rule of criticism, that we must submit to their authority; it is because those rules are derived from works which have been distinguished by the uninterrupted admiration of all the more improved part of mankind, from their earliest appearance down to this present hour. For whatever, through a long series of ages, has been universally esteemed as beautiful, cannot but be conformable to our just and natural ideas of beauty.

The opposition, however, which sometimes divides the opinions of those whose judgments may be supposed equal and perfect, is urged as a powerful objection against the reality of a fixed canon of criticism: it is a proof, you think, that after all which can be said of fine taste, it must ultimately be resolved into the peculiar relish of each individual. But this diversity of sentiments will not, of itself, destroy the evidence of the criterion; since the same effect may be produced by numberless other causes. A thousand accidental circumstances may concur in counteracting the force of the rule, even allowing it to be ever so fixed and invariable, when left in its free and uninfluenced state. Not to mention that false bias which party or personal dislike may fix upon the mind,

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the most unprejudiced critic will find it difficult to disengage himself entirely from those partial affections in favour of particular beauties, to which either the general course of his studies, or the peculiar cast of his temper, may have rendered him most sensible. But as perfection in any works of genius results from the united beauty and propriety of its several distinct parts, and as it is impossible that any human composition should possess all those qualities in their highest and most sovereign degree; the mind, when she pronounces judgment upon any piece of this sort, is apt to decide of its merit, as those circumstances which she most admires, either prevail or are deficient. Thus, for instance, the excellency of the Roman masters in painting, consists in beauty of design, nobleness of attitude, and delicacy of expression; but the charms of good colouring are wanting. On the contrary, the Venetian school is said to have neglected design a little too much; but at the same time has been more attentive to the grace and harmony of well-disposed lights and shades. Now it will be admitted by all admirers of this noble art, that no composition of the pencil can be perfect, where either of these qualities are absent; yet the most accomplished judge may be so particularly struck with one or other of these excellencies, in preference to the rest, as to be influenced in his censure or applause of the whole tabature, by the predominancy or deficiency of his favourite beauty. Something of this kind (where the meaner prejudices do not operate) is ever, I am persuaded, the occasion of that diversity of sentences which we occasionally hear pronounced by the most approved judges on the same piece. But this only shews that much caution is necessary, to give a fine taste its full and unobstructed effect; not that it is in itself uncertain and precarious.

Fitzosborne.

§ 241. *Reflections upon seeing Mr. POPE's House at Binfield. In a Letter.*

Your letter found me just upon my return from an excursion into Berkshire, where I have been paying a visit to a friend, who is drinking the waters at Sunning-Hill. In one of my morning rides over that delightful country, I accidentally passed through a little village, which afforded me much agreeable meditation; as in times to come, perhaps, it will be visited by the lovers of the polite arts, with

as much veneration as Virgil's tomb, or any other celebrated spot of antiquity. The place I mean is Binfield, where the Poet, to whom I am indebted (in common with every reader of taste) for so much exquisite entertainment, spent the earliest part of his youth. I will not scruple to confess, that I looked upon the scene where he planned some of those beautiful performances, which first recommended him to the notice of the world, with a degree of enthusiasm; and could not but consider the ground as sacred, that was impressed with the footsteps of a genius that undoubtedly does the highest honour to our age and nation.

The situation of mind in which I found myself upon this occasion, suggested to my remembrance a passage in Tully, which I thought I never so thoroughly entered into the spirit of before. That noble author, in one of his philosophical conversation-pieces, introduces his friend Atticus as observing the pleasing effect which scenes of this nature are wont to have upon one's mind: "Movemur enim," says that polite Roman, "nescio quo pacto, locis ipsis, in quibus eorum, quos diligimus aut admiramur, adsunt vestigia. Me quidem ipsæ illæ nostræ Athenæ, non tam operibus magnificis exquisitisque antiquorum artibus delectant, quam recordatione summorum virorum, ubi quisque habitare, ubi sedere, ubi disputare sit solitus."

Thus, you see, I could defend myself by an example of great authority, were I in danger upon this occasion of being ridiculed as a romantic visionary. But I am too well acquainted with the refined sentiments of Orontes, to be under any apprehension he will condemn the impressions I have here acknowledged. On the contrary, I have often heard you mention with approbation, a circumstance of this kind which is related of Silius Italicus. The annual ceremonies which that poet performed at Virgil's sepulchre, gave you a more favourable opinion of his taste, you confessed, than any thing in his works was able to raise.

It is certain, that some of the greatest names of antiquity have distinguished themselves, by the high reverence they shewed to the poetical character. Scipio, you may remember, desired to be laid in the same tomb with Ennius; and I am inclined to pardon that successful madman Alexander many of his extravagancies, for the

generous regard he paid to the memory of Pindar, at the sacking of Thebes.

There seems, indeed, to be something in poetry that raises the professors of that very singular talent, far higher in the estimation of the world in general, than those who excel in any other of the refined arts. And accordingly we find that poets have been distinguished by antiquity with the most remarkable honours. Thus Homer, we are told, was deified at Smyrna; as the citizens of Mytilene stamped the image of Sappho upon their public coin: Anacreon received a solemn invitation to spend his days at Athens, and Hipparchus, the son of Pisistratus, fitted out a splendid vessel in order to transport him thither: and when Virgil came into the theatre at Rome, the whole audience rose up and saluted him, with the same respect as they would have paid to Augustus himself.

Painting, one would imagine, has the fairest pretensions of rivalling her sister art in the number of admirers; and yet, where Apelles is mentioned once, Homer is celebrated a thousand times. Nor can this be accounted for by urging that the works of the latter are still extant, while those of the former have perished long since: for is not Milton's Paradise Lost more universally esteemed than Raphael's Cartoons?

The truth, I imagine, is, there are more who are natural judges of the harmony of numbers, than of the grace of proportions. One meets with but few who have not, in some degree at least, a tolerable ear; but a judicious eye is a far more uncommon possession. For as words are the universal medium, which all men employ in order to convey their sentiments to each other; it seems a just consequence, that they should be more generally formed for relishing and judging of performances in that way: whereas the art of representing ideas by means of lines and colours, lies more out of the road of common use, and is therefore less adapted to the taste of the general run of mankind.

I hazard this observation, in the hopes of drawing from you your sentiments upon a subject, in which no man is more qualified to decide; as indeed it is to the conversation of Orontes, that I am indebted for the discovery of many refined delicacies in the imitative arts, which, without his judicious assistance, would have lain

concealed to me with other common observers. *Fitzosborne.*

§ 242. *Concerning the Use of the Ancient Mythology in Modern Poetry. In a Letter.*

If there was any thing in any former letter inconsistent with that esteem which is justly due to the ancients, I desire to retract it in this; and disavow every expression which might seem to give precedency to the moderns in works of genius. I am so far indeed from entertaining the sentiments you impute to me, that I have often endeavoured to account for that superiority which is so visible in the compositions of their poets: and have frequently assigned their religion as in the number of those causes, which probably concurred to give them this remarkable pre-eminence. That enthusiasm which is so essential to every true artist in the poetical way, was considerably heightened and enflamed by the whole turn of their sacred doctrines; and the fancied presence of their Muses had almost as wonderful an effect upon their thoughts and language, as if they had been really and divinely inspired. Whilst all nature was supposed to swarm with divinities, and every oak and fountain was believed to be the residence of some presiding deity; what wonder if the poet was animated by the imagined influence of such exalted society, and found himself transported beyond the ordinary limits of sober humanity? The mind when attended only by mere mortals of superior powers, is observed to rise in her strength; and her faculties open and enlarge themselves when she acts in the view of those, for whom she has conceived a more than common reverence. But when the force of superstition moves in concert with the powers of imagination, and genius is enflamed by devotion, poetry must shine out in all her brightest perfection and splendor.

Whatever, therefore, the philosopher might think of the religion of his country; it was the interest of the poet to be thoroughly orthodox. If he gave up his creed, he must renounce his numbers: and there could be no inspiration, where there were no Muses. This is so true, that it is in compositions of the poetical kind alone that the ancients seem to have the principal advantage over the moderns: in every other species of writing one might venture

perhaps

perhaps to assert, that these latter ages have, at least, equalled them. When I say so, I do not confine myself to the productions of our own nation, but comprehend likewise those of our neighbours: and with that extent the observation will possibly hold true, even without an exception in favour of history and oratory.

But whatever may with justice be determined concerning that question, it is certain, at least, that the practice of all succeeding poets confirms the notion for which I am principally contending. Though the altars of Paganism have many ages since been thrown down, and groves are no longer sacred; yet the language of the poets has not changed with the religion of the times, but the gods of Greece and Rome are still adored in modern verse. Is not this a confession, that fancy is enlivened by superstition, and that the ancient bards caught their rapture from the old mythology? I will own, however, that I think there is something ridiculous in this unnatural adoption, and that a modern poet makes but an awkward figure with his antiquated gods. When the Pagan system was sanctioned by popular belief, a piece of machinery of that kind, as it had the air of probability, afforded a very striking manner of celebrating any remarkable circumstance, or raising any common one. But now that this superstition is no longer supported by vulgar opinion, it has lost its principal grace and efficacy, and seems to be, in general, the most cold and uninteresting method in which a poet can work up his sentiments. What, for instance, can be, more unaffected and spiritless, than the compliment which Boileau has paid to Louis the XIVth on his famous passage over the Rhine? He represents the Naiads, you may remember, as alarming the god of that river with an account of the march of the French monarch; upon which the river-god assumes the appearance of an old experienced commander, and flies to a Dutch fort, in order to exhort the garrison to sally out and dispute the intended passage. Accordingly they range themselves in form of battle, with the Rhine at their head; who, after some vain efforts, observing Mars and Bellona on the side of the enemy, is so terrified with the view of those superior divinities, that he most gallantly runs away, and leaves the hero in quiet possession of his banks. I know not how far this may be relished by critics, or

justified by custom; but as I am only mentioning my particular taste, I will acknowledge, that it appears to me extremely insipid and puerile.

I have not, however, so much of the spirit of Typhœus in me, as to make war upon the gods without restriction, and attempt to exclude them from their whole poetical dominions. To represent natural, moral, or intellectual qualities and affections as persons, and appropriate to them those general emblems by which their powers and properties are usually typified in Pagan theology, may be allowed as one of the most pleasing and graceful figures of poetical rhetoric. When Dryden, addressing himself to the month of May as to a person, says,

For thee the Graces lead the dancing hours;

one may consider him as speaking only in metaphor: and when such shadowy beings are thus just shown to the imagination, and immediately withdrawn again, they certainly have a very powerful effect. But I can relish them no farther than as figures only; when they are extended in any serious composition beyond the limits of metaphor, and exhibited under all the various actions of real persons, I cannot but consider them as so many absurdities, which custom has unreasonably patronized. Thus Spenser, in one of his pastorals, represents the god of love as flying, like a bird, from bough to bough. A shepherd, who hears a rustling among the bushes, supposes it to be some game, and accordingly discharges his bow. Cupid returns the shot, and after several arrows had been mutually exchanged between them, the unfortunate swain discovers whom it is he is contending with: but as he is endeavouring to make his escape, receives a desperate wound in the heel. This fiction makes the subject of a very pretty idyllium in one of the Greek poets; yet is extremely flat and disgusting as it is adopted by our British bard. And the reason of the difference is plain: in the former it is supported by a popular superstition; whereas no strain of imagination can give it the least air of probability, as it is worked up by the latter,

Quodcumque mihi ostendis sic, incredulus odi.

HOR.

I must confess, at the same time, that the inimitable Prior has introduced this fabulous scheme with such uncommon grace, and has paid so many genteel compliments

pliments to his mistress by the assistance of Venus and Cupid, that one is carried off from observing the impropriety of this machinery, by the pleasing address with which he manages it: and I never read his tender poems of this kind, without applying to him what Seneca somewhere says upon a similar occasion: *Major ille est qui judicium abstulit, quam qui meruit.*

To speak my sentiments in one word, I would leave the gods in full possession of allegorical and burlesque poems: in all others I would never suffer them to make their appearance in person and as agents, but to enter only in simile or allusion. It is thus Waller, of all our poets, has most happily employed them: and his application of the story of Daphne and Apollo will serve as an instance, in what manner the ancient mythology may be adopted with the utmost propriety and beauty.

Fitzosborne.

§ 243. *On the Delicacy of every Author of Genius, with respect to his own performances. In a Letter.*

If the ingenious piece you communicated to me, requires any farther touches of your pencil, I must acknowledge the truth to be, what you are inclined to suspect, that my friendship has imposed upon my judgment. But though in the present instance your delicacy seems far too refined; yet, in general, I must agree with you, that works of the most permanent kind, are not the effects of a lucky moment, nor struck out at a single heat. The best performances, indeed, have generally cost the most labour; and that ease, which is so essential to fine writing, has seldom been attained without repeated and severe corrections: *Ludentis speciem dabit et torquetur*, is a motto that may be applied, I believe, to most successful authors of genius. With as much facility as the numbers of the natural Prior seem to have flowed from him, they were the result (if I am not misinformed) of much application: and a friend of mine, who undertook to transcribe one of the noblest performances of the finest genius that this, or perhaps any age can boast, has often assured me, that there is not a single line, as it is now published, which stands in conformity with the original manuscript. The truth is, every sentiment has its peculiar expression, and every word its precise place, which do not always immediately present themselves, and generally demand frequent trials,

before they can be properly adjusted; not to mention the more important difficulties, which necessarily occur in settling the plan and regulating the higher parts which compose the structure of a finished work.

Those, indeed, who know what pangs it costs even the most fertile genius to be delivered of a just and regular production, might be inclined, perhaps, to cry out with the most ancient of authors, *Ob! that mine adversary had written a book!* A writer of refined taste has the continual mortification to find himself incapable of taking entire possession of that ideal beauty which warms and fills his imagination. His conceptions still rise above all the powers of his art, and he can but faintly copy out those images of perfection, which are impressed upon his mind. Never was any thing, says Tully, more beautiful than the Venus of Apelles, or the Jove of Phidias; yet were they by no means equal to those high notions of beauty which animated the geniuses of those wonderful artists. In the same manner, he observes, the great masters of oratory imagined to themselves a certain perfection of eloquence, which they could only contemplate in idea, but in vain attempted to draw out in expression. Perhaps no author ever perpetuated his reputation, who could write up to the full standard of his own judgment: and I am persuaded that he, who upon a survey of his compositions can with entire complacency pronounce them good, will hardly find the world join with him in the same favourable sentence.

The most judicious of all poets, the imitable Virgil, used to resemble his productions to those of that animal, who, agreeably to the notions of the Ancients, was supposed to bring forth her young into the world, a mere rude and shapeless mass; he was obliged to retouch them again and again, he acknowledged, before they acquired their proper form and beauty. Accordingly we are told, that after having spent eleven years in composing his *Æneid*, he intended to have set apart three more for the revival of that glorious performance. But being prevented by his last sickness from giving those finishing touches, which his exquisite judgment conceived to be still necessary, he directed his friends Tucca and Varius to burn the noblest poem that ever appeared in the Roman language. In the same spirit of delicacy, Mr. Dryden tells us, that had he taken

more

more time in translating this author, he might possibly have succeeded better: but never, he assures us, could he have succeeded so well as to have satisfied himself.

In a word, Hortensius, I agree with you, that there is nothing more difficult than to fill up the character of an author, who proposes to raise a just and lasting admiration; who is not contented with those little transient flashes of applause, which attend the ordinary race of writers, but considers only how he may shine out to posterity; who extends his views beyond the present generation, and cultivates those productions which are to flourish in future ages. What Sir William Temple observes of poetry, may be applied to every other work where taste and imagination are concerned: "It requires the greatest contrivances to compose it; a genius both penetrating and solid; an expression both strong and delicate. There must be a great agitation of mind to invent, a great calm to judge and correct: there must be upon the same tree, and at the same time, both flower and fruit." But though I know you would not value yourself upon any performance, wherein these very opposite and very singular qualities were not conspicuous: yet I must remind you at the same time, that when the file ceases to polish, it must necessarily weaken. You will remember, therefore, that there is a medium between the immoderate caution of that orator, who was three Olympiads in writing a single oration; and the extravagant expedition of that poet, whose funeral pile was composed of his own numberless productions.

Fitzosborne.

§ 244. *Reflections upon Style. In a Letter.*

The beauties of Style seem to be generally considered as below the attention both of an author and a reader. I know not, therefore, whether I may venture to acknowledge, that among the numberless graces of your late performance, I particularly admired that strength and elegance with which you have enforced and adorned the noblest sentiments.

There was a time, however, (and it was a period of the truest refinements) when an excellence of this kind was esteemed in the number of the politest accomplishments; as it was the ambition of some of the greatest names of antiquity to distinguish themselves in the improvement of their native tongue. Julius Cæsar, who was not only the greatest hero, but the

finest gentleman that ever, perhaps, appeared in the world, was desirous of adding this talent to his other most shining endowments: and we are told he studied the language of his country with much application: as we are sure he possessed it in its highest elegance. What a loss, Euphronius, is it to the literary world, that the treatise which he wrote upon this subject, is perished with many other valuable works of that age! But though we are deprived of the benefit of his observations, we are happily not without an instance of their effects; and his own memoirs will ever remain as the best and brightest exemplar, not only of true generalship, but of fine writing. He published them, indeed, only as materials for the use of those who should be disposed to enlarge upon that remarkable period of the Roman story; yet the purity and gracefulness of his style were such, that no judicious writer durst attempt to touch the subject after him.

Having produced so illustrious an instance in favour of an art, for which I have ventured to admire you; it would be impertinent to add a second, were I to cite a less authority than that of the immortal Tully. This noble author, in his dialogue concerning the celebrated Roman orators, frequently mentions it as a very high encomium, that they possessed the elegance of their native language; and introduces Brutus as declaring, that he should prefer the honour of being esteemed the great master and improver of Roman eloquence, even to the glory of many triumphs.

But to add reason to precedent, and to view this art in its use as well as its dignity; will it not be allowed of some importance, when it is considered, that eloquence is one of the most considerable auxiliaries of truth? Nothing indeed contributes more to subdue the mind to the force of reason, than her being supported by the powerful assistance of masculine and vigorous oratory. As on the contrary, the most legitimate arguments may be disappointed of that success they deserve, by being attended with a spiritless and enfeebled expression. Accordingly, that most elegant of writers, the inimitable Mr. Addison, observes, in one of his essays, that "there is as much difference between comprehending a thought clothed in Cicero's language and that of an ordinary writer, as between seeing an object by the light of a taper and the light of the sun."

It is surely then a very strange conceit

of the celebrated Malbranche, who seems to think the pleasure which arises from perusing a well written piece, is of the criminal kind, and has its source in the weakness and effeminacy of the human heart. A man must have a very uncommon severity of temper indeed, who can find any thing to condemn in adding charms to truth, and gaining the heart by captivating the ear; in uniting roses with the thorns of science, and joining pleasure with instruction.

The truth is, the mind is delighted with a fine style, upon the same principle that it prefers regularity to confusion, and beauty to deformity. A taste of this sort is indeed so far from being a mark of any depravity of our nature, that I should rather consider it as an evidence, in some degree, of the moral rectitude of its constitution, as it is a proof of its retaining some relish at least of harmony and order.

One might be apt indeed to suspect, that certain writers amongst us had considered all beauties of this sort in the same gloomy view with Malbranche: or, at least, that they avoided every refinement in style, as unworthy a lover of truth and philosophy. Their sentiments are sunk by the lowest expressions, and seem condemned to the first curse, of creeping upon the ground all the days of their life. Others, on the contrary, mistake pomp for dignity; and, in order to raise their expressions above vulgar language, lift them up beyond common apprehensions, esteeming it (one should imagine) a mark of their genius, that it requires some ingenuity to penetrate their meaning. But how few writers, like Euphronius, know to hit that true medium which lies between those distant extremes! How seldom do we meet with an author, whose expressions, like those of my friend, are glowing but not glaring, whose metaphors are natural but not common, whose periods are harmonious but not poetical; in a word, whose sentiments are well set, and shewn to the understanding in their truest and most advantageous lustre.

Fitzborne.

§ 245. *On Thinking. In a Letter.*

If one would rate any particular merit according to its true valuation, it may be necessary, perhaps, to consider how far it can be justly claimed by mankind in general. I am sure, at least, when I read the very uncommon sentiments of your last letter, I found their judicious author rise

in my esteem, by reflecting, that there is not a more singular character in the world, than that of a thinking man. It is not merely having a succession of ideas, which lightly skim over the mind, that can with any propriety be stiled by that denomination. It is observing them separately and distinctly, and ranging them under their respective classes; it is calmly and steadily viewing our opinions on every side, and resolutely tracing them through all their consequences and connections, that constitutes the man of reflection; and distinguishes reason from fancy. Providence, indeed, does not seem to have formed any very considerable number of our species for an extensive exercise of this higher faculty; as the thoughts of the far greater part of mankind are necessarily restrained within the ordinary purposes of animal life. But even if we look up to those who move in much superior orbits, and who have opportunities to improve, as well as leisure to exercise, their understandings; we shall find, that thinking is one of the least exerted privileges of cultivated humanity.

It is, indeed, an operation of the mind which meets with many obstructions to check its just and free direction; but there are two principles, which prevail more or less in the constitutions of most men, that particularly contribute to keep this faculty of the soul unemployed: I mean, pride and indolence. To descend to truth through the tedious progression of well-examined deductions, is considered as a reproach to the quickness of understanding; as it is much too laborious a method for any but those who are possessed of a vigorous and resolute activity of mind. For this reason, the greater part of our species generally chuse either to seize upon their conclusions at once, or to take them by rebound from others, as best suiting with their vanity or their laziness. Accordingly Mr. Locke observes, that there are not so many errors and wrong opinions in the world as is generally imagined. Not that he thinks mankind are by any means uniform in embracing truth; but because the majority of them, he maintains, have no thought or opinion at all about those doctrines concerning which they raise the greatest clamour. Like the common soldiers in an army, they follow where their leaders direct, without knowing, or even enquiring, into the cause for which they so warmly contend.

This will account for the slow steps by which

which truth has advanced in the world, on one side; and for those absurd systems which, at different periods, have had an universal currency, on the other. For there is a strange disposition in human nature, either blindly to tread the same paths that have been traversed by others, or to strike out into the most devious extravagancies: the greater part of the world will either totally renounce their reason, or reason only from the wild suggestions of an heated imagination.

From the same source may be derived those divisions and animosities which break the union both of public and private societies, and turn the peace and harmony of human intercourse into dissonance and contention. For while men judge and act by such measures as have not been proved by the standard of dispassionate reason, they must equally be mistaken in their estimates both of their own conduct and that of others.

If we turn our view from active to contemplative life, we may have occasion, perhaps to remark, that thinking is no less uncommon in the literary than the civil world. The number of those writers who can, with any justness of expression, be termed thinking authors, would not form a very copious library, though one were to take in all of that kind which both ancient and modern times have produced. Necessarily, I imagine, must one exclude from a collection of this sort, all critics, commentators, translators, and, in short, all that numerous under-tribe in the commonwealth of literature, that owe their existence merely to the thoughts of others. I should reject, for the same reason, such compilers as Valerius Maximus and Aulus Gellius: though it must be owned, indeed, their works have acquired an accidental value, as they preserve to us several curious traces of antiquity, which time would otherwise have entirely worn out. Those teeming geniuses likewise, who have propagated the fruits of their studies through a long series of tracts, would have little pretence, I believe, to be admitted as writers of reflection. For this reason I cannot regret the loss of those incredible numbers of compositions which some of the Ancients are said to have produced:

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Ingenium; capis quem fama est esse, librisque
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Thus Epicurus, we are told, left behind

him three hundred volumes of his own works, wherein he had not inserted a single quotation; and we have it upon the authority of Varro's own words, that he himself composed four hundred and ninety books. Seneca assures us, that Didymus the Grammarian wrote no less than four thousand; but Origin, it seems, was yet more prolific, and extended his performances even to six thousand treatises. It is obvious to imagine, with what sort of materials the productions of such expeditious workmen were wrought up: sound thought and well-matured reflections could have no share, we may be sure, in these hasty performances. Thus are books multiplied, whilst authors are scarce; and so much easier is it to write than to think! But shall I not myself, Palamedes, prove an instance that it is so, if I suspend any longer your own more important reflections, by interrupting you with such as mine?

Fitzosborne.

§ 246. *Reflections on the Advantages of Conversation.*

It is with much pleasure I look back upon that philosophical week which I lately enjoyed at —; as there is no part, perhaps, of social life which affords more real satisfaction than those hours which one passes in rational and unreserved conversation. The free communication of sentiments amongst a set of ingenious and speculative friends, such as those you gave me the opportunity of meeting, throws the mind into the most advantageous exercise, and shews the strength or weakness of its opinions, with greater force of conviction than any other method we can employ.

That "it is not good for man to be alone," is true in more views of our species than one; and society gives strength to our reason, as well as polish to our manners. The soul, when left entirely to her own solitary contemplations, is insensibly drawn by a sort of constitutional bias, which generally leads her opinions to the side of her inclinations. Hence it is that she contracts those peculiarities of reasoning, and little habits of thinking, which so often confirm her in the most fantastical errors. But nothing is more likely to recover the mind from this false bent, than the counterwarmth of impartial debate. Conversation opens our views, and gives our faculties a more vigorous play; it puts us upon turning our notions on every side, and holds them up to a light that discovers those latent

of the celebrated Malbranche, who seems to think the pleasure which arises from perusing a well written piece, is of the criminal kind, and has its source in the weakness and effeminacy of the human heart. A man must have a very uncommon severity of temper indeed, who can find any thing to condemn in adding charms to truth, and gaining the heart by captivating the ear; in uniting roses with the thorns of science, and joining pleasure with instruction.

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Fitzosborns.

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That "it is not good for man to be alone," is true in more views of our species than one; and society gives strength to our reason, as well as polish to our manners. The soul, when left entirely to her own solitary contemplations, is insensibly drawn by a sort of constitutional bias, which generally leads her opinions to the side of her inclinations. Hence it is that she contracts those peculiarities of reasoning, and little habits of thinking, which so often confirm her in the most fantastical errors. But nothing is more likely to recover the mind from this false bent, than the counterwarmth of impartial debate. Conversation opens our views, and gives our faculties a more vigorous play; it puts us upon turning our notions on every side, and holds them up to a light that discovers those latent

tent flaws which would probably have lain concealed in the gloom of unagitated abstraction. Accordingly, one may remark, that most of those wild doctrines, which have been let loose upon the world, have generally owed their birth to persons whose circumstances or dispositions have given them the fewest opportunities of canvassing their respective systems in the way of free and friendly debate. Had the authors of many an extravagant hypothesis discussed their principles in private circles; ere they had given vent to them in public, the observation of Varro had never, perhaps, been made, (or never, at least, with so much justice) that "there is no opinion so absurd, but has some philosopher or other to produce in its support."

Upon this principle, I imagine, it is, that some of the finest pieces of antiquity are written in the dialogue-manner. Plato and Tully, it should seem, thought truth could never be examined with more advantage than amidst the amicable opposition of well regulated converse. It is probable, indeed, that subjects of a serious and philosophical kind were more frequently the topics of Greek and Roman conversations than they are of ours; as the circumstances of the world had not yet given occasion to those prudential reasons which may now, perhaps, restrain a more free exchange of sentiments amongst us. There was something, likewise, in the very scenes themselves where they usually assembled, that almost unavoidably turned the stream of their conversations into this useful channel. Their rooms and gardens were generally adorned, you know, with the statues of the greatest masters of reason that had then appeared in the world; and while Socrates or Aristotle stood in their view, it is no wonder their discourse fell upon those subjects which such animating representations would naturally suggest. It is probable, therefore, that many of those ancient pieces which are drawn up in the dialogue-manner, were no imaginary conversations invented by their authors; but faithful transcripts from real life. And it is this circumstance, perhaps, as much as any other, which contributes to give them that remarkable advantage over the generality of modern compositions which have been formed upon the same plan. I am sure, at least, I could scarce name more than three or four of this kind which have appeared in our language worthy of notice. My lord Shaftesbury's dialogue, intitled "The

Moralists;" Mr. Addison's upon Ancient Coins; Mr. Spence's upon the Odyssey; together with those of my very ingenious friend, Philemon to Hydaspes; are, almost, the only productions in this way which have hitherto come forth amongst us with advantage. These, indeed, are all masterpieces of the kind, and written in the true spirit of learning and politeness. The conversation in each of these most elegant performances is conducted, not in the usual absurd method of introducing one disputant to be tamely silenced by the other; but in the more lively dramatic manner, where a just contrast of characters is preserved throughout, and where the several speakers support their respective sentiments with all the strength and spirit of a well-bred opposition.

Fitzosborne.

§ 247. *On the Great Historical Ages.*

Every age has produced heroes and politicians; all nations have experienced revolutions; and all histories are nearly alike, to those who seek only to furnish their memories with facts; but whosoever thinks, or, what is still more rare, whosoever has taste, will find but four ages in the history of the world. These four happy ages are those in which the arts were carried to perfection; and which, by serving as the æra of the greatness of the human mind, are examples for posterity.

The first of these ages to which true glory is annexed, is that of Philip and Alexander, or that of a Pericles, a Demosthenes, an Aristotle, a Plato, an Apelles, a Phidias, and a Praxiteles; and this honour has been confined within the limits of ancient Greece; the rest of the known world was then in a state of barbarism.

The second age is that of Cæsar and Augustus, distinguished likewise by the names of Lucretius, Cicero, Titus, Livius, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Varro, and Vitruvius.

The third is that which followed the taking of Constantinople by Mahomet II. Then a family of private citizens was seen to do that which the kings of Europe ought to have undertaken. The Medicis invited to Florence the Learned, who had been driven out of Greece by the Turks.—This was the age of Italy's glory. The polite arts had already recovered a new life in that country; the Italians honoured them with the title of Virtù, as the first Greeks had distinguished them by the name of Wisdom. Every thing tended towards

perfection;

perfection; a Michael Angelo, a Raphael, a Titian, a Tasso, and an Ariosto, flourished. The art of engraving was invented; elegant architecture appeared again, as admirable as in the most triumphant ages of Rome; and the Gothic barbarism, which had disfigured Europe in every kind of production, was driven from Italy, to make way for good taste.

The arts, always transplanted from Greece to Italy, found themselves in a favourable soil, where they instantly produced fruit. France, England, Germany, and Spain, aimed in their turns to gather these fruits; but either they could not live in those climates, or else they degenerated very fast.

Francis I. encouraged learned men, but such as were merely learned men: he had architects; but he had no Michael Angelo, nor Palladio: he endeavoured in vain to establish schools for painting; the Italian masters whom he invited to France, raised no pupils there. Some epigrams and a few loose tales, made the whole of our poetry. Rabelais was the only prose-writer in vogue, in the time of Henry II.

In a word, the Italians alone were in possession of every thing that was beautiful, excepting music, which was then but in a rude state; and experimental philosophy, which was every where equally unknown.

Lastly, the fourth age is that known by the name of the age of Lewis XIV. and is perhaps that which approaches the nearest to perfection of all the four; enriched by the discoveries of the three former ones, it has done greater things in certain kinds than those three together. All the arts, indeed, were not carried farther than under the Medicis, Augustus, and Alexander; but human reason in general was more improved. In this age we first became acquainted with sound philosophy. It may truly be said, that from the last years of Cardinal Richelieu's administration till those which followed the death of Lewis XIV. there has happened such a general revolution in our arts, our genius, our manners, and even in our government, as will serve as an immortal mark to the true glory of our country. This happy influence has not been confined to France; it has communicated itself to England, where it has stirred up an emulation which that ingenious and deeply-learned nation stood in need of at that time; it has introduced taste into Germany, and the sciences into Russia; it has

even re-animated Italy, which was languishing; and Europe is indebted for its politeness and spirit of society, to the court of Lewis XIV.

Before this time, the Italians called all the people on this side the Alps by the name of Barbarians. It must be owned that the French, in some degree, deserved this reproachful epithet. Our forefathers joined the romantic gallantry of the Moors with the Gothic rudeness. They had hardly any of the agreeable arts amongst them; which is a proof that the useful arts were likewise neglected; for, when once the things of use are carried to perfection, the transition is quickly made to the elegant and the agreeable; and it is not at all astonishing, that painting, sculpture, poetry, eloquence, and philosophy, should be in a manner unknown to a nation, who, though possessed of harbours on the Western ocean and the Mediterranean sea, were without ships; and who, though fond of luxury to an excess, were hardly provided with the most common manufactures.

The Jews, the Genoese, the Venetians, the Portuguese, the Flemish, the Dutch, and the English, carried on, in their turns, the trade of France, which was ignorant even of the first principles of commerce. Lewis XIII. at his accession to the crown, had not a single ship; the city of Paris contained not quite four hundred thousand men, and had not above four fine public edifices; the other cities of the kingdom resembled those pitiful villages which we see on the other side of the Loire. The nobility, who were all stationed in the country, in dungeons surrounded with deep ditches, oppressed the peasant who cultivated the land. The high roads were almost impassable; the towns were destitute of police; and the government had hardly any credit among foreign nations.

We must acknowledge, that, ever since the decline of the Carolingian family, France had languished more or less in this infirm state, merely for want of the benefit of a good administration.

For a state to be powerful, the people must either enjoy a liberty founded on the laws, or the royal authority must be fixed beyond all opposition. In France, the people were slaves till the reign of Philip Augustus; the noblemen were tyrants till Lewis XI.; and the kings, always employed in maintaining their authority against their vassals, had neither leisure to think about

about the happiness of their subjects, nor the power of making them happy.

Lewis XI. did a great deal for the regal power, but nothing for the happiness or glory of the nation. Francis I. gave birth to trade, navigation, and all the arts: but he was too unfortunate to make them take root in the nation during his time, so that they all perished with him. Henry the Great was on the point of raising France from the calamities and barbarisms in which she had been plunged by thirty years of discord, when he was assassinated in his capital, in the midst of a people whom he had begun to make happy. The Cardinal de Richelieu, busied in humbling the house of Austria, the Calvinists, and the Gracques, did not enjoy a power sufficiently undisturbed to reform the nation; but he had at least the honour of beginning this happy work.

Thus, for the space of 900 years, our genius had been almost always restrained under a Gothic government, in the midst of divisions and civil wars; destitute of any laws or fixed customs; changing every second century a language which still continued rude and unformed. The nobles were without discipline, and strangers to everything but war and idleness: the clergy lived in disorder and ignorance; and the common people without industry, and stupified in their wretchedness.

The French had no share either in the great discoveries, or admirable inventions of other nations: they have no title to the discoveries of printing, gunpowder, glasses, telescopes, the sector, compass, the air-pump, or the true system of the universe: they were making tournaments, while the Portuguese and Spaniards were discovering and conquering new countries from the east to the west of the known world. Charles V. had already scattered the treasures of Mexico over Europe, before the subjects of Francis I. had discovered the uncultivated country of Canada; but, by the little which the French did in the beginning of the sixteenth century, we may see what they are capable of when properly conducted.

Voltaire.

§ 248. *On the Constitution of ENGLAND.*

In every government there are three sorts of power: the legislative; the executive, in respect to things dependent on the law of nations; and the executive, in regard to things that depend on the civil law.

By virtue of the first, the prince or magistrate enacts temporary or perpetual laws, and amends or abrogates those that have been already enacted. By the second, he makes peace or war, sends or receives embassies, he establishes the public security, and provides against invasions. By the third, he punishes criminals, or determines the disputes that arise between individuals. The latter we shall call the judiciary power, and the other simply the executive power of the state.

The political liberty of the subject is a tranquillity of mind, arising from the opinion each person has of his safety. In order to have this liberty, it is requisite the government be so constituted as one man need not to be afraid of another.

When the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person, or in the same body of magistrates, there can be no liberty; because apprehensions may arise, lest the same monarch or senate should enact tyrannical laws, to execute them in a tyrannical manner.

Again, there is no liberty, if the power of judging be not separated from the legislative and executive powers. Were it joined with the legislative, the life and liberty of the subject would be exposed to arbitrary controul; for the judge would be then the legislator. Were it joined to the executive power, the judge might behave with all the violence of an oppressor.

There would be an end of every thing, were the same man, or the same body, whether of the nobles, or of the people, to exercise those three powers, that of enacting laws, that of executing the public resolutions, and that of judging the crimes or differences of individuals.

Most kingdoms of Europe enjoy a moderate government, because the prince, who is invested with the two first powers, leaves the third to his subjects. In Turkey, where these three powers are united in the Sultan's person, the subjects groan under the weight of a most frightful oppression.

In the republics of Italy, where these three powers are united, there is less liberty than in our monarchies. Hence their government is obliged to have recourse to as violent methods for its support, as even that of the Turks; witness the state inquisitors at Venice, and the lion's mouth, into which every informer may at all hours throw his written accusations.

What

What a situation must the poor subject be in under those republics! The same body of magistrates are possessed, as executors of the law, of the whole power they have given themselves in quality of legislators. They may plunder the state by their general determinations; and, as they have likewise the judiciary power in their hands, every private citizen may be ruined by their particular decisions.

The whole power is here united in one body; and though there is no external pomp that indicates a despotic sway, yet the people feel the effects of it every moment.

Hence it is that many of the princes of Europe, whose aim has been levelled at arbitrary power, have constantly set out with uniting in their own persons all the branches of magistracy, and all the great offices of state.

I allow, indeed, that the mere hereditary aristocracy of the Italian republics, does not answer exactly to the despotic power of the eastern princes. The number of magistrates sometimes softens the power of the magistracy; the whole body of the nobles do not always concur in the same designs; and different tribunals are erected, that temper each other. Thus, at Venice, the legislative power is in the Council, the executive in the Pregadi, and the judiciary in the Quarantia. But the mischief is, that these different tribunals are composed of magistrates all belonging to the same body, which constitutes almost one and the same power.

The judiciary power ought not to be given to a standing senate; it should be exercised by persons taken from the body of the people (as at Athens) at certain times of the year, and pursuant to a form and manner prescribed by law, in order to erect a tribunal that should last only as long as necessity requires.

By this means the power of judging, a power so terrible to mankind, not being annexed to any particular state or profession, becomes, as it were, invisible. People have not then the judges continually present to their view; they fear the office, but not the magistrate.

In accusations of a deep or criminal nature, it is proper the person accused should have the privilege of chusing in some measure his judges, in concurrence with the law; or at least he should have a right to except against so great a number, that the remaining part may be deemed his own choice.

The other two powers may be given rather to magistrates or permanent bodies, because they are not exercised on any private subject; one being no more than the general will of the state, and the other the execution of that general will.

But though the tribunals ought not to be fixed, yet the judgments ought, and to such a degree as to be always conformable to the exact letter of the law. Were they to be the private opinion of the judge, people would then live in society without knowing exactly the obligation it lays them under.

The judges ought likewise to be in the same station as the accused, or in other words, his peers, to the end that he may not imagine he is fallen into the hands of persons inclined to treat him with rigour.

If the legislature leaves the executive power in possession of a right to imprison those subjects who can give security for their good behaviour, there is an end of liberty; unless they are taken up, in order to answer without delay to a capital crime: in this case they are really free, being subject only to the power of the law.

But should the legislature think itself in danger by some secret conspiracy against the state, or by a correspondence with a foreign enemy, it might authorize the executive power, for a short and limited time, to imprison suspected persons, who in that case would lose their liberty only for a while, to preserve it for ever.

And this is the only reasonable method that can be substituted to the tyrannical magistracy of the Ephori, and to the state inquisitors of Venice, who are also despotic.

As in a free state, every man who is supposed a free agent, ought to be his own governor; so the legislative power should reside in the whole body of the people. But since this is impossible in large states, and in small ones is subject to many inconveniences, it is fit the people should act by their representatives, what they cannot act by themselves.

The inhabitants of a particular town are much better acquainted with its wants and interests, than with those of other places; and are better judges of the capacity of their neighbours, than of that of the rest of their countrymen. The members therefore of the legislature should not be chosen from the general body of the nation; but it is proper, that in every considerable place, a representative should be elected by the inhabitants.

The

The great advantage of representatives is their being capable of discussing affairs. For this the people collectively are extremely unfit, which is one of the greatest inconveniences of a democracy.

It is not at all necessary that the representatives, who have received a general instruction from their electors, should wait to be particularly instructed in every affair, as is practised in the diets of Germany. True it is, that by this way of proceeding, the speeches of the deputies might with greater propriety be called the voice of the nation; but, on the other hand, this would throw them into infinite delays, would give each deputy a power of controlling the assembly; and on the most urgent and pressing occasions, the springs of the nation might be stoppt by a single caprice.

When the deputies, as Mr. Sidney well observes, represent a body of people, as in Holland, they ought to be accountable to their constituents: but it is a different thing in England, where they are deputed by boroughs.

All the inhabitants of the several districts ought to have a right of voting at the election of a representative, except such as are in so mean a situation, as to be deemed to have no will of their own.

One great fault there was in most of the ancient republics; that the people had a right to active resolutions, such as require some execution; a thing of which they are absolutely incapable. They ought to have no hand in the government, but for the chusing of representatives, which is within their reach. For though few can tell the exact degree of men's capacities, yet there are none but are capable of knowing, in general, whether the person they chuse is better qualified than most of his neighbours.

Neither ought the representative body to be chosen for active resolutions, for which it is not so fit; but for the enacting of laws, or to see whether the laws already enacted be duly executed; a thing they are very capable of, and which none indeed but themselves can properly perform.

In a state, there are always persons distinguished by their birth, riches, or honours; but were they to be confounded with the common people, and to have only the weight of a single vote like the rest, the common liberty would be their slavery, and they would have no interest in supporting it, as most of the popular resolutions would be against them. The share

they have, therefore, in the legislature, ought to be proportioned to the other advantages they have in the state; which happens only when they form a body that has a right to put a stop to the enterprizes of the people, as the people have a right to put a stop to theirs.

The legislative power is therefore committed to the body of the nobles, and to the body chosen to represent the people, which have each their assemblies and deliberations apart, each their separate views and interests.

Of the three powers above-mentioned, the judiciary is in some measure next to nothing. There remains therefore only two; and as those have need of a regulating power to temper them, the part of the legislative body, composed of the nobility, is extremely proper for this very purpose.

The body of the nobility ought to be hereditary. In the first place it is so in its own nature: and in the next, there must be a considerable interest to preserve its privileges; privileges that in themselves are obnoxious to popular envy, and of course, in a free state, are always in danger.

But as an hereditary power might be tempted to pursue its own particular interests, and forget those of the people; it is proper that, where they may reap a singular advantage from being corrupted, as in the laws relating to the supplies, they should have no other share in the legislation, than the power of rejecting, and not that of resolving.

By the power of resolving, I mean the right of ordaining by their own authority, or of amending what has been ordained by others. By the power of rejecting, I would be understood to mean the right of annulling a resolution taken by another, which was the power of the tribunes at Rome. And though the person possessed of the privilege of rejecting may likewise have the right of approving, yet this approbation passes for no more than a declaration, that he intends to make no use of his privilege of rejecting, and is derived from that very privilege.

The executive power ought to be in the hands of a monarch: because this branch of government, which has always need of expedition, is better administered by one than by many: whereas whatever depends on the legislative power, is oftentimes better regulated by many than by a single person.

But

But if there was no monarch, and the executive power was committed to a certain number of persons selected from the legislative body, there would be an end then of liberty; by reason the two powers would be united, as the same persons would actually sometimes have, and would moreover be always able to have, a share in both.

Were the legislative body to be a considerable time without meeting, this would likewise put an end to liberty. For one of these two things would naturally follow; either that there would be no longer any legislative resolutions, and then the state would fall into anarchy; or that these resolutions would be taken by the executive power, which would render it absolute.

It would be needless for the legislative body to continue always assembled. This would be troublesome to the representatives, and moreover would cut out too much work for the executive power, so as to take off its attention from executing, and oblige it to think only of defending its own prerogatives, and the right it has to execute.

Again, were the legislative body to be always assembled, it might happen to be kept up only by filling the places of the deceased members with new representatives; and in that case, if the legislative body was once corrupted, the evil would be past all remedy. When different legislative bodies succeed one another, the people, who have a bad opinion of that which is actually sitting, may reasonably entertain some hopes of the next: but were it to be always the same body, the people, upon seeing it once corrupted, would no longer expect any good from its laws; and of course they would either become desperate, or fall into a state of indolence.

The legislative body should not assemble of itself. For a body is supposed to have no will but when it is assembled: and besides, were it not to assemble unanimously it would be impossible to determine which was really the legislative body, the part assembled or the other. And if it had a right to prorogue itself, it might happen never to be prorogued; which would be extremely dangerous in case it should ever attempt to encroach on the executive power. Besides, there are seasons, some of which are more proper than others, for assembling the legislative body: it is fit therefore that the executive power should regulate the time of convening as well as

the duration of those assemblies, according to the circumstances and exigencies of state known to itself.

Were the executive power not to have a right of putting a stop to the encroachments of the legislative body, the latter would become despotic; for as it might arrogate to itself what authority it pleased, it would soon destroy all the other powers.

But it is not proper, on the other hand, that the legislative power should have a right to stop the executive. For as the executive has its natural limits, it is useless to confine it; besides, the executive power is generally employed in momentary operations. The power, therefore, of the Roman tribunes was faulty, as it put a stop not only to the legislation, but likewise to the execution itself; which was attended with infinite mischiefs.

But if the legislative power, in a free government, ought to have no right to stop the executive, it has a right, and ought to have the means of examining in what manner its laws have been executed; an advantage which this government has over that of Crete and Sparta, where the Cosmi and the Ephori gave no account of their administration.

But whatever may be the issue of that examination, the legislative body ought not to have a power of judging the person, nor of course the conduct, of him who is intrusted with the executive power. His person should be sacred, because, as it is necessary for the good of the state to prevent the legislative body from rendering themselves arbitrary, the moment he is accused or tried, there is an end of liberty.

In this case the state would be no longer a monarchy, but a kind of republican, though not a free government. But as the person intrusted with the executive power cannot abuse it without bad counsellors, and such as hate the laws as ministers, though the laws favour them as subjects; these men may be examined and punished. An advantage which this government has over that of Gnidus, where the law allowed of no such thing as calling the Anymones* to an account, even after their administration†; and therefore the people could never obtain any satisfaction for the injuries done them.

* These were magistrates chosen annually by the people. See Stephen of Byzantium.

† It was lawful to accuse the Roman magistrates after the expiration of their several offices. See Dionys. Halicarn. l. 9. the affair of Genutius the tribune.

Though,

Though, in general, the judiciary power ought not to be united with any part of the legislative, yet this is liable to three exceptions, founded on the particular interest of the party accused.

The great are always obnoxious to popular envy; and were they to be judged by the people, they might be in danger from their judges, and would moreover be deprived of the privilege which the meanest subject is possessed of, in a free state, of being tried by their peers. The nobility, for this reason, ought not to be cited before the ordinary courts of judicature, but before that part of the legislature which is composed of their own body.

It is possible that the law, which is clear-fighted in one sense, and blind in another, might in some cases be too severe. But as we have already observed, the national judges are no more than the mouth that pronounces the words of the law, mere passive beings, incapable of moderating either its force or rigour. That part, therefore, of the legislative body, which we have just now observed to be a necessary tribunal on another occasion, is also a necessary tribunal in this; it belongs to its supreme authority to moderate the law in favour of the law itself, by mitigating the sentence.

It might also happen, that a subject intrusted with the administration of public affairs, might infringe the rights of the people, and be guilty of crimes which the ordinary magistrates either could not, or would not punish. But in general the legislative power cannot judge; and much less can it be a judge in this particular case, where it represents the party concerned, which is the people. It can only therefore impeach: but before what court shall it bring its impeachment? Must it go and abase itself before the ordinary tribunals, which are its inferiors, and being composed moreover of men who are chosen from the people as well as itself, will naturally be swayed by the authority of so powerful an accuser? No: in order to preserve the dignity of the people, and the security of the subject, the legislative part which represents the people, must bring in its charge before the legislative part which represents the nobility, who have neither the same interests nor the same passions.

Here is an advantage which this government has over most of the ancient republics, where there was this abuse, that the people were at the same time both judge and accuser.

The executive power, pursuant to what has been already said, ought to have a share in the legislature by the power of rejecting, otherwise it would soon be stripped of its prerogative. But should the legislative power usurp a share of the executive, the latter would be equally undone.

If the prince were to have a share in the legislature by the power of resolving, liberty would be lost. But as it is necessary he should have a share in the legislature, for the support of his own prerogative, this share must consist in the power of rejecting.

The change of government at Rome was owing to this, that neither the senate, nor the magistrates, who were intrusted with the other, had the right of rejecting, which was entirely lodged in the people.

Here then is the fundamental constitution of the government we are treating of. The legislative body being composed of two parts, one checks the other by the mutual privilege of rejecting: they are both checked by the executive power, as the executive is by the legislative.

These three powers should naturally form a state of repose or inaction. But as there is a necessity for movement in the course of human affairs, they are forced to move, but still to move in concert.

As the executive power has no other part in the legislative than the privilege of rejecting, it can have no share in the public debates. It is not even necessary that it should propose, because, as it may always disapprove of the resolutions that shall be taken, it may likewise reject the decisions on those proposals which were made against its will.

In some ancient commonwealths, where public debates were carried on by the people in a body, it was natural for the executive power to propose and debate with the people, otherwise their resolutions must have been attended with a strange confusion.

Were the executive power to ordain the raising of public money, otherwise than by giving its consent, liberty would be at an end; because it would become legislative in the most important point of legislation.

If the legislative power was to settle the subsidies, not from year to year, but for ever,

ever, it would run the risk of losing its liberty, because the executive power would no longer be dependent; and when once it was possessed of such a perpetual right, it would be a matter of indifference, whether it held it of itself, or of another. The same may be said, if it should fix, not from year to year, but for ever, the sea and land forces with which it is to intrust the executive power.

To prevent the executive power from being able to oppress, it is requisite that the armies with which it is intrusted should consist of the people, and have the same spirit as the people; as was the case at Rome till the time of Marius. To obtain this end, there are only two ways; either that the persons employed in the army should have sufficient property to answer for their conduct to their fellow-subjects, and be enlisted only for a year, as was customary at Rome: or if there should be a standing army, composed chiefly of the most despicable part of the nation, the legislative power should have a right to disband them as soon as it pleased; the soldiers should live in common with the rest of the people; and no separate camp, barracks, or fortress, should be suffered.

When once an army is established, it ought not to depend immediately on the legislative, but on the executive power; and this from the very nature of the thing; its business consisting more in acting than in deliberation.

From a manner of thinking that prevails amongst mankind, they set a higher value upon courage than timorousness, on activity than prudence, on strength than counsel. Hence the army will ever despise a senate, and respect their own officers. They will naturally slight the orders sent them by a body of men, whom they look upon as cowards, and therefore unworthy to command them. So that as soon as the army depends on the legislative body, the government becomes a military one; and if the contrary has ever happened, it has been owing to some extraordinary circumstances. It is because the army has always kept divided; it is because it was composed of several bodies, that depended each on their particular province: it is because the capital towns were strong places, defended by their natural situation, and not garrisoned with regular troops. Holland, for instance, is still safer than Venice; she might drown

or starve the revolted troops; for as they are not quartered in towns capable of furnishing them with necessary subsistence, this subsistence is of course precarious.

Whoever shall read the admirable treatise of Tacitus on the manners of the Germans, will find that it is from them the English have borrowed the idea of their political government. This beautiful system was invented first in the woods.

As all human things have an end, the state we are speaking of will lose its liberty, it will perish. Have not Rome, Sparta, and Carthage perished? It will perish when the legislative power shall be more corrupted than the executive.

It is not my business to examine whether the English actually enjoy this liberty, or not. It is sufficient for my purpose to observe, that it is established by their laws; and I enquire no further.

Neither do I pretend by this to undervalue other governments, nor to say that this extreme political liberty ought to give uneasiness to those who have only a moderate share of it. How should I have any such design, I, who think that even the excess of reason is not always desirable, and that mankind generally find their account better in mediums than in extremes?

Harrington, in his *Oceana*, has also inquired into the highest point of liberty to which the constitution of a state may be carried. But of him indeed it may be said, that for want of knowing the nature of real liberty, he busied himself in pursuit of an imaginary one; and that he built a Chalcedon, though he had a Byzantium before his eyes.

Montesquieu.

§ 249. Of COLUMBUS, and the Discovery of AMERICA.

It is to the discoveries of the Portuguese in the old world, that we are indebted for the new; if we may call the conquest of America an obligation, which proved so fatal to its inhabitants, and at times to the conquerors themselves.

This was doubtless the most important event that ever happened on our globe, one half of which had been hitherto strangers to the other. Whatever had been esteemed most great or noble before, seemed absorbed in this kind of new creation. We still mention with respectful admiration, the names of the Argonauts,

who did not perform the hundredth part of what was done by the sailors under Gama and Albuquerque. How many altars would have been raised by the ancients to a Greek, who had discovered America! and yet Bartholomew and Christopher Columbus were not thus rewarded.

Columbus, struck with the wonderful expeditions of the Portuguese, imagined that something greater might be done; and from a bare inspection of the map of our world, concluded that there must be another, which might be found by sailing always west. He had courage equal to his genius, or indeed superior, seeing he had to struggle with the prejudices of his contemporaries, and the repulses of several princes to whom he tendered his services. Genoa, which was his native country, treated his schemes as visionary, and by that means lost the only opportunity that could have offered of aggrandizing her power. Henry VII. king of England, who was too greedy of money to hazard any on this noble attempt, would not listen to the proposals made by Columbus's brother; and Columbus himself was rejected by John II. of Portugal, whose attention was wholly employed upon the coast of Africa. He had no prospect of success in applying to the French, whose marine lay totally neglected, and their affairs more confused than ever, during the minority of Charles VIII. The emperor Maximilian had neither ports for shipping, money to fit out a fleet, nor sufficient courage to engage in a scheme of this nature. The Venetians, indeed, might have undertaken it; but whether the natural aversion of the Genoese to these people would not suffer Columbus to apply to the rivals of his country, or that the Venetians had no idea of any thing more important than the trade they carried on from Alexandria and in the Levant, Columbus at length fixed all his hopes on the court of Spain.

Ferdinand, king of Arragon, and Isabella, queen of Castile, had by their marriage united all Spain under one dominion, excepting only the kingdom of Grenada, which was still in the possession of the Moors; but which Ferdinand soon after took from them. The union of these two princes had prepared the way for the greatness of Spain: which was afterwards begun by Columbus; he was however obliged to undergo eight years of incessant

application, before Isabella's court would consent to accept of the inestimable benefit this great man offered it. The bane of all great projects is the want of money. The Spanish court was poor; and the prior, Perez, and two merchants, named Pinzono, were obliged to advance seventeen thousand ducats towards fitting out the armament. Columbus procured a patent from the court, and at length set sail from the port of Palos in Andalusia, with three ships, on August 23, in the year 1492.

It was not above a month after his departure from the Canary islands, where he had come to an anchor to get refreshment, when Columbus discovered the first island in America; and during this short run, he suffered more from the murmurings and discontent of the people of his fleet, than he had done even from the refusals of the princes he had applied to. This island, which he discovered, and named St. Salvador, lies about a thousand leagues from the Canaries; presently after, he likewise discovered the Lucayan islands, together with those of Cuba and Hispaniola, now called St. Domingo.

Ferdinand and Isabella were in the utmost surprize to see him return, at the end of nine months, with some of the American natives of Hispaniola, several rarities from that country, and a quantity of gold, with which he presented their majesties.

The king and queen made him sit down in their presence, covered like a grandee of Spain, and created him high admiral and viceroy of the new world. Columbus was now every where looked upon as an extraordinary person sent from heaven. Every one was vying who should be foremost in assisting him in his undertakings, and embarking under his command. He soon set sail again, with a fleet of seventeen ships. He now made the discovery of several other new islands, particularly the Caribbees and Jamaica. Doubt had been changed into admiration on his first voyage; in this, admiration was turned into envy.

He was admiral and viceroy, and to these titles might have been added that of the benefactor of Ferdinand and Isabella. Nevertheless, he was brought home prisoner to Spain, by judges who had been purposely sent out on board to observe his conduct. As soon as it was known that Columbus was arrived, the people ran in shoals to meet him, as the guardian genius

of Spain. Columbus was brought from the ship, and appeared on shore chained hands and feet.

He had been thus treated by the orders of Fonseca, bishop of Burgos, the intendant of the expedition, whose ingratitude was as great as the other's services. Isabella was ashamed of what she saw, and did all in her power to make Columbus amends for the injuries done to him: however, he was not suffered to depart for four years, either because they feared that he would seize upon what he had discovered for himself, or that they were willing to have time to observe his behaviour. At length he was sent on another voyage to the new world; and now it was, that he discovered the continent, at six degrees distance from the equator, and saw that part of the coast on which Carthage has been since built.

At the time that Columbus first promised a new hemisphere, it was insisted upon that no such hemisphere could exist; and after he had made the actual discovery of it, it was pretended that it had been known long before. I shall not mention one Martin Behem, of Nuremberg, who, it is said, went from that city to the straits of Magellan in 1460, with a patent from the Duchess of Burgundy, who, as she was not alive at that time, could not issue patents. Nor shall I take notice of the pretended charts of this Martin Behem, which are still shewn; nor of the evident contradictions which discredit this story: but, in short, it was not pretended that Martin Behem had peopled America; the honour was given to the Carthaginians, and a book of Aristotle was quoted on the occasion, which he never wrote. Some found out a conformity between some words in the Caribbee and Hebrew languages, and did not fail to follow so fine an opening. Others were positive that the children of Noah, after settling in Siberia, passed from thence over to Canada on the ice; and that their descendants, afterwards born in Canada, had gone and peopled Peru. According to others again, the Chinese and Japanese sent colonies into America, and carried over lions with them for their diversion, though there are no lions either in China or Japan. In this manner have many learned men argued upon the discoveries made by men of genius. If it should be asked, how men first came upon the continent of America? is it not easily answered, that they were placed there by the same Power who causes trees and grass to grow?

The reply which Columbus made to some of those who envied him the high reputation he had gained, is still famous. These people pretended that nothing could be more easy than the discoveries he had made; upon which he proposed to them to set an egg upright on one of its ends; but when they had tried in vain to do it, he broke one end of the egg, and set it upright with ease. They told him any one could do that: How comes it then, replied Columbus, that not one among you thought of it?—This story is related of Brunelleschi, who improved architecture at Florence many years before Columbus was born. Most bon mots are only the repetition of things that have been said before.

The ashes of Columbus cannot be affected by the reputation he gained while living, in having doubled for us the works of the creation. But mankind delight to do justice to the illustrious dead, either from a vain hope that they enhance thereby the merit of the living, or that they are naturally fond of truth. Americo Vesputi, whom we call Americus Vesputius, a merchant of Florence, had the honour of giving his name to this new half of the globe, in which he did not possess one acre of land, and pretended to be the first who discovered the continent. But supposing it true, that he was the first discoverer, the glory was certainly due to him, who had the penetration and courage to undertake and perform the first voyage. Honour, as Newton says in his dispute with Leibnitz, is due only to the first inventor; those that follow after are only his scholars. Columbus had made three voyages, as admiral and viceroy, five years before Americus Vesputius had made one as a geographer, under the command of Admiral Ojeda; but this latter writing to his friends at Florence, that he had discovered a new world, they believed him on his word; and the citizens of Florence decreed, that a grand illumination should be made before the door of his house every three years, on the feast of All Saints. And yet could this man be said to deserve any honours, for happening to be on board a fleet that, in 1489, sailed along the coast of Brazil, when Columbus had, five years before, pointed out the way to the rest of the world?

There has lately appeared at Florence a life of this Americus Vesputius, which seems to be written with very little regard to truth, and without any conclusive reasoning. Several French authors are there

complained of, who have done justice to Columbus's merit; but the writer should not have fallen upon the French authors, but on the Spanish, who were the first that did this justice. This writer says, that "he will confound the vanity of the French nation, who have always attacked with impunity the honour and success of the Italian nation." What vanity can there be in saying, that it was a Genoese who first discovered America? or how is the honour of the Italian nation injured in owning, that it was to an Italian, born in Genoa, that we are indebted for the new world? I purposely remark this want of equity, good-breeding, and good-sense, as we have too many examples of it; and I must say, that the good French writers have in general been the least guilty of this insufferable fault; and one great reason of their being so universally read throughout Europe, is their doing justice to all nations.

The inhabitants of these islands, and of the continent, were a new race of men. They were all without beards, and were as much astonished at the faces of the Spaniards, as they were at their ships and artillery: they at first looked upon these new visitors as monsters or gods, who had come out of the sky or the sea. These voyages, and those of the Portuguese, had now taught us how inconsiderable a spot of the globe our Europe was, and what an astonishing variety reigns in the world. Indostan was known to be inhabited by a race of men whose complexions were yellow. In Africa and Asia, at some distance from the equator, there had been found several kinds of black men; and after travellers had penetrated into America as far as the line, they met with a race of people who were tolerably white. The natives of Brazil are of the colour of bronze. The Chinese still appear to differ entirely from the rest of mankind, in the make of their eyes and noses. But what is still to be remarked is, that into whatsoever regions these various races are transplanted, their complexions never change, unless they mingle with the natives of the country. The mucous membrane of the negroes, which is known to be of a black colour, is a manifest proof that there is a differential principle in each species of men, as well as plants.

Dependant upon this principle, nature has formed the different degrees of genius, and the characters of nations, which are seldom known to change. Hence the ne-

groes are slaves to other men, and are purchased on the coast of Africa, like beasts, for a sum of money; and the vast multitudes of negroes transplanted into our American colonies, serve as slaves under a very inconsiderable number of Europeans. Experience has likewise taught us how great a superiority the Europeans have over the Americans, who are every where easily overcome, and have not dared to attempt a revolution, though a thousand to one superior in numbers.

This part of America was also remarkable on account of its animals and plants, which are not to be found in the other three parts of the world, and which are of so great use to us. Horses, corn of all kinds, and iron, were not wanting in Mexico and Peru; and among the many valuable commodities unknown to the old world, cochineal was the principal, and was brought us from this country. Its use in dyeing has now made us forget the scarlet, which for time immemorial had been the only thing known for giving a fine red colour.

The importation of cochineal was soon succeeded by that of indigo, cacao, vanilla, and those woods which serve for ornament and medicinal purposes, particularly the quinquina, or jesuits bark, which is the only specific against intermitting fevers. Nature has placed this remedy in the mountains of Peru, whilst she had dispersed the disease it cured through all the rest of the world. This new continent likewise furnished pearls, coloured stones, and diamonds.

It is certain, that America at present furnishes the meanest citizen of Europe with his conveniences and pleasures. The gold and silver mines, at their first discovery, were of service only to the kings of Spain and the merchants; the rest of the world was impoverished by them, for the great multitudes who did not follow business, found themselves possessed of a very small quantity of specie, in comparison with the immense sums accumulated by those, who had the advantage of the first discoveries. But by degrees, the great quantity of gold and silver which was sent from America, was dispersed throughout all Europe, and by passing into a number of hands, the distribution is become more equal. The price of commodities is likewise increased in Europe, in proportion to the increase of specie.

To comprehend how the treasures of America passed from the possession of the Spaniards

Spaniards into that of other nations, it will be sufficient to consider these two things: the use which Charles V. and Philip II. made of their money; and the manner in which other nations acquired a share in the wealth of Peru.

The emperor Charles V. who was always travelling, and always at war, necessarily dispersed a great quantity of that specie which he received from Mexico and Peru, through Germany and Italy. When he sent his son Philip over to England, to marry queen Mary, and take upon him the title of King of England, that prince deposited in the tower of London twenty-seven large chests of silver in bars, and an hundred horse-loads of gold and silver coin. The troubles in Flanders, and the intrigues of the league in France, cost this Philip, according to his own confession, above three thousand millions of livres of our money.

The manner in which the gold and silver of Peru is distributed amongst all the people of Europe, and from thence is sent to the East-Indies, is a surprising, though well known circumstance. By a strict law enacted by Ferdinand and Isabella, and afterwards confirmed by Charles V. and all the kings of Spain, all other nations were not only excluded the entrance into any of the ports in Spanish America, but likewise from having the least share, directly or indirectly, in the trade of that part of the world. One would have imagined, that this law would have enabled the Spaniards to subdue all Europe; and yet Spain subsists only by the continual violation of this very law. It can hardly furnish exports for America to the value of four millions; whereas the rest of Europe sometimes send over merchandize to the amount of near fifty millions. This prodigious trade of the nations at enmity or in alliance with Spain, is carried on by the Spaniards themselves, who are always faithful in their dealings with individuals, and always cheating their king. The Spaniards gave no security to foreign merchants for the performance of their contracts; a mutual credit, without which there never could have been any commerce, supplies the place of other obligations.

The manner in which the Spaniards for a long time consigned the gold and silver to foreigners, which was brought home by their galleons, was still more surprising. The Spaniard, who at Cadiz is properly factor for the foreigner, delivered the bul-

lion he received to the care of certain bravoos, called Meteors: these, armed with pistols at their belt, and a long sword, carried the bullion in parcels properly marked, to the ramparts, and flung them over to other meteors, who waited below, and carried them to the boats which were to receive them, and these boats carried them on board the ships in the road. These meteors and the factors, together with the commissaries and the guards, who never disturbed them, had each a stated fee, and the foreign merchant was never cheated. The king, who received a duty upon this money at the arrival of the galleons, was likewise a gainer; so that, properly speaking, the law only was cheated; a law which would be absolutely useless if not eluded, and which, nevertheless, cannot yet be abrogated, because old prejudices are always the most difficult to be overcome amongst men.

The greatest instance of the violation of this law, and of the fidelity of the Spaniards, was in the year 1684, when war was declared between France and Spain. His catholic majesty endeavoured to seize upon the effects of all the French in his kingdom; but he in vain issued edicts and admonitions, inquiries and excommunications; not a single Spanish factor would betray his French correspondent. This fidelity, which does so much honour to the Spanish nation, plainly shews, that men only willingly obey those laws, which they themselves have made for the good of society, and that those which are the mere effects of a sovereign's will, always meet with opposition.

As the discovery of America was at first the source of much good to the Spaniards, it afterwards occasioned them many and considerable evils. One has been, the depriving that kingdom of its subjects, by the great numbers necessarily required to people the colonies: another was, the infecting the world with a disease, which was before known only in the new world, and particularly in the island of Hispaniola. Several of the companions of Christopher Columbus returned home infected with this contagion, which afterwards spread over Europe. It is certain, that this poison, which taints the springs of life, was peculiar to America, as the plague and the small-pox were diseases originally endemic to the southern parts of Numidia. We are not to believe, that the eating of human flesh, practised by some of the

American savages, occasioned this disorder. There were no cannibals on the island of Hispaniola, where it was most frequent and inveterate; neither are we to suppose, with some, that it proceeded from too great an excess of sensual pleasures. Nature had never punished excesses of this kind with such disorders in the world; and even to this day, we find that a momentary indulgence, which has been passed for eight or ten years, may bring this cruel and shameful scourge upon the chastest union.

The great Columbus, after having built several houses on these islands, and discovered the continent, returned to Spain, where he enjoyed a reputation unfilled by rapine or cruelty, and died at Valladolid in 1506. But the governors of Cuba and Hispaniola, who succeeded him, being persuaded that these provinces furnished gold, resolved to make the discovery at the price of the lives of the inhabitants. In short, whether they thought the natives had conceived an implacable hatred to them; or that they were apprehensive of their superior numbers; or that the rage of slaughter, when once begun, knows no bounds, they, in the space of a few years, entirely depopulated Hispaniola and Cuba, the former of which contained three millions of inhabitants, and the latter above six hundred thousand.

Bartholomew de la Casas, bishop of Chiapa, who was an eye-witness to these desolations, relates, that they hunted down the natives with dogs. These wretched savages, almost naked and without arms, were pursued like wild beasts in the forests, devoured alive by dogs, shot to death, or surprised and burnt in their habitations.

He farther declares, from ocular testimony, that they frequently caused a number of these miserable wretches to be summoned by a priest to come in, and submit to the Christian religion, and to the king of Spain; and that after this ceremony, which was only an additional act of injustice, they put them to death without the least remorse.—I believe that De la Casas has exaggerated in many parts of his relation; but, allowing him to have said ten times more than is truth, there remains enough to make us shudder with horror.

It may seem surprising, that this massacre of a whole race of men could have been carried on in the sight, and under the administration of several religious of the order of St Jerome; for we know that

Cardinal Ximenes, who was prime minister of Castile before the time of Charles V. sent over four monks of this order, in quality of presidents of the royal council of the island. Doubtless they were not able to resist the torrent; and the hatred of the natives to their new masters, being with just reason become implacable, rendered their destruction unhappily necessary.

Voltaire.

§ 250. *The Influence of the Progress of Science on the Manners and Characters of Men.*

The progress of science, and the cultivation of literature, had considerable effect in changing the manners of the European nations, and introducing that civility and refinement by which they are now distinguished. At the time when their empire was overturned, the Romans, though they had lost that correct taste which has rendered the productions of their ancestors the standards of excellence, and models for imitation to succeeding ages, still preserved their love of letters, and cultivated the arts with great ardour. But rude Barbarians were so far from being struck with any admiration of these unknown accomplishments, that they despised them. They were not arrived at that state of society, in which those faculties of the human mind, that have beauty and elegance for their objects, begin to unfold themselves. They were strangers to all those wants and desires which are the parents of ingenious invention; and as they did not comprehend either the merit or utility of the Roman arts, they destroyed the monuments of them, with industry not inferior to that with which their posterity have since studied to preserve, or to recover them. The convulsions occasioned by their settlement in the empire; the frequent as well as violent revolutions in every kingdom which they established; together with the interior defects in the form of government which they introduced, banished security and leisure; prevented the growth of taste or the culture of science; and kept Europe, during several centuries, in a state of ignorance. But as soon as liberty and independence began to be felt by every part of the community, and communicated some taste of the advantages arising from commerce, from public order, and from personal security, the human mind became conscious of powers which it did not formerly perceive, and fond of occupations or pursuits of

of which it was formerly incapable. Towards the beginning of the twelfth century, we discern the first symptoms of its awakening from that lethargy in which it had long been sunk, and observe it turning with curiosity and attention towards new objects.

The first literary efforts, however, of the European nations, in the middle ages, were extremely ill-directed. Among nations, as well as individuals, the powers of imagination attain some degree of vigour before the intellectual faculties are much exercised in speculative or abstract disquisition. Men are poets before they are philosophers. They feel with sensibility, and describe with force, when they have made but little progress in investigation or reasoning. The age of Homer and of Hesiod long preceded that of Thales, or of Socrates. But unhappily for literature, our ancestors, deviating from this course which nature points out, plunged at once into the depths of abstruse and metaphysical enquiry. They had been converted to the Christian faith soon after they settled in their new conquests: but they did not receive it pure. The presumption of men had added to the simple and instructive doctrines of Christianity, the theories of a vain philosophy, that attempted to penetrate into mysteries, and to decide questions which the limited faculties of the human mind are unable to comprehend, or to resolve. These over curious speculations were incorporated with the system of religion, and came to be considered as the most essential part of it. As soon, then, as curiosity prompted men to inquire and to reason, these were the subjects which first presented themselves, and engaged their attention. The scholastic theology, with its infinite train of bold disquisitions, and subtle distinctions concerning points which are not the object of human reason, was the first production of the spirit of enquiry after it began to resume some degree of activity and vigour in Europe.

It was not this circumstance alone that gave such a wrong turn to the minds of men, when they began again to exercise talents which they had so long neglected. Most of the persons who attempted to revive literature in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, had received instruction, or derived their principles of science from the Greeks in the eastern empire, or from the Arabians in Spain and Africa. Both these people, acute and inquisitive to excess, cor-

rupted those sciences which they cultivated. The former rendered theology a system of speculative refinement, or of endless controversy. The latter communicated to philosophy a spirit of metaphysical and frivolous subtlety. Misled by these guides, the persons who first applied to science were involved in a maze of intricate inquiries. Instead of allowing their fancy to take its natural range, and to produce such works of invention as might have improved their taste, and refined their sentiments; instead of cultivating those arts which embellish human life, and render it comfortable; they were fettered by authority; they were led astray by example, and wasted the whole force of their genius in speculations as unavailing as they were difficult.

But fruitless and ill-directed as these speculations were, their novelty roused, and their boldness interested, the human mind. The ardour with which men pursued these uninviting studies was astonishing. Genuine philosophy was never cultivated, in any enlightened age, with greater zeal. Schools, upon the model of those instituted by Charlemagne, were opened in every cathedral, and almost in every monastery of note. Colleges and universities were erected, and formed into communities, or corporations, governed by their own laws, and invested with separate and extensive jurisdiction over their own members. A regular course of studies was planned. Privileges of great value were conferred on masters and scholars. Academical titles and honours of various kinds were invented, as a recompence for both. Nor was it in the schools alone that superiority in science led to reputation and authority; it became the object of respect in life, and advanced such as acquired it to a rank of no inconsiderable eminence. Allured by all these advantages, an incredible number of students resorted to these new seats of learning, and crowded with eagerness into that new path which was open to fame and distinction.

But how considerable soever these first efforts may appear, there was one circumstance which prevented the effects of them from being as extensive as they ought to have been. All the languages in Europe, during the period under review*, were barbarous. They were destitute of elegance, of force, and even of perspicuity. No attempt had

* From the subversion of the Roman empire to the beginning of the sixteenth century.

been hitherto made to improve or to polish them. The Latin tongue was consecrated by the church to religion. Custom, with authority scarce less sacred, had appropriated it to literature. All the sciences cultivated in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were taught in Latin. All the books with respect to them, were written in that language. To have treated of any important subject in a modern language, would have been deemed a degradation of it. This confined science within a very narrow circle. The learned alone were admitted into the temple of knowledge; the gate was shut against all others, who were allowed to remain involved in their former darkness and ignorance.

But though science was thus prevented, during several ages, from diffusing itself through society, and its influence was circumscribed, the progress of it may be mentioned, nevertheless, among the great causes which contributed to introduce a change of manners into Europe. That ardent, though ill-judged, spirit of inquiry, which I have described, occasioned a fermentation of mind, which put ingenuity and invention in motion, and gave them vigour. It led men to a new employment of their faculties, which they found to be agreeable, as well as interesting. It accustomed them to exercises and occupations which tended to soften their manners, and to give them some relish for those gentle virtues which are peculiar to nations among whom science hath been cultivated with success.

Robertson.

§ 251. *On the respect paid by the LACEDÆMONIANS and ATHENIANS to old Age.*

It happened at Athens, during a public representation of some play exhibited in honour of the commonwealth, that an old gentleman came too late for a place suitable to his age and quality. Many of the young gentlemen, who observed the difficulty and confusion he was in, made signs to him that they would accommodate him if he came where they sat: the good man bustled through the crowd accordingly; but when he came to the seats to which he was invited, the jest was, to sit close and expose him as he stood, out of countenance, to the whole audience. The frolic went round all the Athenian benches. But on those occasions, there were also particular places assigned for foreigners: when the good man skulked towards the boxes ap-

pointed for the Lacedæmonians, that honest people, more virtuous than polite, rose up all to a man, and, with the greatest respect, received him among them. The Athenians, being suddenly touched with a sense of the Spartan virtue, and their own degeneracy, gave a thunder of applause; and the old man cried out, "The Athenians understand what is good, but the Lacedæmonians practise it."

Spectator.

§ 252. *On PÆTUS and ARRIA.*

In the reign of Claudius, the Roman emperor, Arria, the wife of Cæcinnæ Pætus, was an illustrious pattern of magnanimity and conjugal affection.

It happened that her husband and her son were both, at the same time, attacked with a dangerous illness. The son died. He was a youth endowed with every quality of mind and person which could endear him to his parents. His mother's heart was torn with all the anguish of grief; yet she resolved to conceal the distressing event from her husband. She prepared and conducted his funeral so privately, that Pætus did not know of his death. Whenever she came into her husband's bed-chamber, she pretended her son was better; and, as often as he inquired after his health, would answer, that he had rested well, or had eaten with an appetite. When she found that she could no longer restrain her grief, but her tears were gushing out, she would leave the room, and, having given vent to her passion, return again with dry eyes and a serene countenance, as if she had left her sorrow behind her at the door of the chamber.

Camillus Scribonianus, the governor of Dalmatia, having taken up arms against Claudius, Pætus joined himself to his party, and was soon after taken prisoner, and brought to Rome. When the guards were going to put him on board the ship, Arria besought them that she might be permitted to go with him. "Certainly," said she, "you cannot refuse a man of consular dignity, as he is, a few attendants to wait upon him; but, if you will take me, I alone will perform their office." This favour, however, was refused; upon which she hired a small fishing vessel, and boldly ventured to follow the ship.

Returning to Rome, Arria met the wife of Scribonianus in the emperor's palace, who pressing her to discover all that she knew of the insurrection,—"What!" said she,

she, "shall I regard thy advice, who saw
"thy husband murdered in thy very arms,
"and yet survivest him?"

Pætus being condemned to die, Arria formed a deliberate resolution to share his fate, and made no secret of her intention. Thrasea, who married her daughter, attempting to dissuade her from her purpose, among other arguments which he used, said to her, "Would you then, if my life
"were to be taken from me, advise your
"daughter to die with me?" "Most certainly I would," she replied, "if she
"had lived as long, and in as much
"harmony with you, as I have lived with
"Pætus."

Persisting in her determination, she found means to provide herself with a dagger: and one day, when she observed a more than usual gloom on the countenance of Pætus, and perceived that death by the hand of the executioner appeared to him more terrible than in the field of glory—perhaps, too, sensible that it was chiefly for her sake that he wished to live—she drew the dagger from her side, and stabbed herself before his eyes. Then instantly plucking the weapon from her breast, she presented it to her husband, saying, "My
"Pætus, it is not painful *." *Pliny.*

§ 253. ABDOLONYMUS raised to the Government of SIDON.

The city of Sidon having surrendered to Alexander, he ordered Hephæstion to bestow the crown on him whom the Sidonians should think most worthy of that honour. Hephæstion being at that time resident with two young men of distinction, offered them the kingdom; but they refused it, telling him that it was contrary to the laws of their country, to admit any one to that honour, who was not of the royal family. He then, having expressed his admiration of their disinterested spirit, desired them to name one of the royal race, who might remember that he received the crown through their hands. Overlooking many who would have been ambitious of this high honour, they made choice of Abdolonymus, whose singular merit had ren-

dered him conspicuous even in the vale of obscurity. Though remotely related to the royal family, a series of misfortunes had reduced him to the necessity of cultivating a garden, for a small stipend, in the suburbs of the city.

While Abdolonymus was busily employed in weeding his garden, the two friends of Hephæstion, bearing in their hands the ensigns of royalty, approached him, and saluted him king, informing him that Alexander had appointed him to that office; and requiring him immediately to exchange his rustic garb, and utensils of husbandry, for the regal robe and sceptre. At the same time, they urged him, when he should be seated on the throne, and have a nation in his power, not to forget the humble condition from which he had been raised.

All this, at the first, appeared to Abdolonymus as an illusion of the fancy, or an insult offered to his poverty. He requested them not to trouble him farther with their impertinent jests, and to find some other way of amusing themselves, which might leave him in the peaceable enjoyment of his obscure habitation.—At length, however, they convinced him that they were serious in their proposal, and prevailed upon him to accept the regal office, and accompany them to the palace.

No sooner was he in possession of the government, than pride and envy created him enemies, who whispered their murmurs in every place, till at last they reached the ear of Alexander; who, commanding the new-elected prince to be sent for, required of him, with what temper of mind he had borne his poverty. "Would to Heaven," replied Abdolonymus,—"that I may be able
"to bear my crown with equal moderation:
"for when I possessed little, I wanted no
"thing: these hands supplied me with
"whatever I desired." From this answer, Alexander formed so high an idea of his wisdom, that he confirmed the choice which had been made, and annexed a neighbouring province to the government of Sidon.

Quintus Curtius.

§ 254. The Resignation of the Emperor CHARLES V.

Charles resolved to resign his kingdoms to his son, with a solemnity suitable to the importance of the transaction; and to perform this last act of sovereignty with such formal pomp, as might leave an indelible impression on the minds, not only of his subjects,

* In the Tatler, No. 72, a fancy piece is drawn, founded on the principal fact in this story, but wholly fictitious in the circumstances of the tale. The author, mistaking Cæcinnia Pætus for Thrasea Pætus, has accused even Nero unjustly; charging him with an action which certainly belonged to Claudius. See Pliny's Epistles, Book iii. Ep. 26. Dion. Cassius, Lib. lx, and Tacitus, Lib. xvi. § 35.

subjects, but of his successor. With this view, he called Philip out of England, where the peevish temper of his queen, which increased with her despair of having issue, rendered him extremely unhappy; and the jealousy of the English left him no hopes of obtaining the direction of their affairs. Having assembled the states of the Low Countries, at Brussels, on the twenty-fifth of October, one thousand five hundred and fifty-five, Charles seated himself, for the last time, in the chair of state; on one side of which was placed his son, and on the other his sister, the queen of Hungary, regent of the Netherlands; with a splendid retinue of the grandes of Spain, and princes of the empire, standing behind him. The president of the council of Flanders, by his command, explained, in a few words, his intention in calling this extraordinary meeting of the states. He then read the instrument of resignation, by which Charles surrendered to his son Philip all his territories, jurisdiction, and authority in the Low Countries; absolving his subjects there from their oath of allegiance to him, which he required them to transfer to Philip, his lawful heir, and to serve him with the same loyalty and zeal which they had manifested, during so long a course of years, in support of his government.

Charles then rose from his seat, and leaning on the shoulder of the prince of Orange, because he was unable to stand without support, he addressed himself to the audience, and, from a paper which he held in his hand, in order to assist his memory, he recounted with dignity, but without ostentation, all the great things which he had undertaken and performed since the commencement of his administration. He observed, that, from the seventeenth year of his age, he had dedicated all his thoughts and attention to public objects; reserving no portion of his time for the indulgence of his ease, and very little for the enjoyment of private pleasure: that, either in a pacific or hostile manner, he had visited Germany nine times, Spain six times, France four times, Italy seven times, the Low Countries ten times, England twice, Africa as often, and had made eleven voyages by sea: that, while his health permitted him to discharge his duty, and the vigour of his constitution was equal, in any degree, to the arduous office of governing such extensive dominions, he had never shunned labour, nor repined under fatigue: that

now, when his health was broken, and his vigour exhausted by the rage of an incurable distemper, his growing infirmities admonished him to retire; nor was he so fond of reigning, as to retain the sceptre in an impotent hand, which was no longer able to protect his subjects, or to render them happy: that, instead of a sovereign worn out with diseases, and scarcely half alive, he gave them one in the prime of life, accustomed already to govern, and who added to the vigour of youth, all the attention and sagacity of maturer years: that if, during the course of a long administration, he had committed any material error in government; or if, under the pressure of so many and great affairs, and amidst the attention which he had been obliged to give to them, he had either neglected, or injured any of his subjects, he now implored their forgiveness: that, for his part, he should ever retain a grateful sense of their fidelity and attachment, and would carry the remembrance of it along with him to the place of his retreat, as his sweetest consolation, as well as the best reward for all his services; and, in his last prayer, to Almighty God, would pour forth his ardent wishes for their welfare.

Then, turning towards Philip, who fell on his knees, and kissed his father's hand, "If," says he, "I had left you by my death, this rich inheritance, to which I have made such large additions, some regard would have been justly due to my memory on that account: but now, when I voluntarily resign to you what I might still have retained, I may well expect the warmest expressions of thanks on your part. With these, however, I dispense; and shall consider your concern for the welfare of your subjects, and your love of them, as the best and most acceptable testimony of your gratitude to me. It is in your power, by a wise and virtuous administration, to justify the extraordinary proof which I this day give of my paternal affection; and to demonstrate, that you are worthy of the confidence which I repose in you. Preserve an inviolable regard for religion; maintain the Catholic faith in its purity; let the laws of your country be sacred in your eyes; encroach not on the rights and privileges of your people: and, if the time shall ever come, when you shall wish to enjoy the tranquillity of private life, may you have a son endowed with

"such

"such qualities, that you can resign your sceptre to him with as much satisfaction as I give up mine to you."

As soon as Charles had finished this long address to his subjects, and to their new sovereign, he sunk into the chair, exhausted, and ready to faint with the fatigue of such an extraordinary effort. During his discourse, the whole audience melted into tears; some, from admiration of his magnanimity; others, softened by the expressions of tenderness towards his son, and of love to his people; and all were affected with the deepest sorrow, at losing a sovereign, who had distinguished the Netherlands, his native country, with particular marks of his regard and attachment.

A few weeks afterwards, Charles, in an assembly no less splendid, and with a ceremonial equally pompous, resigned to his son the crowns of Spain, with all the territories depending on them, both in the Old and in the New World. Of all these vast possessions he reserved nothing to himself, but an annual pension of a hundred thousand crowns, to defray the charges of his family, and to afford him a small sum for acts of beneficence and charity.

The place he had chosen for his retreat, was the monastery of St. Justus, in the province of Estramadura. It was seated in a vale of no great extent, watered by a small brook, and surrounded by rising grounds, covered with lofty trees. From the nature of the soil, as well as the temperature of the climate, it was esteemed the most healthful and delicious situation in Spain. Some months before his resignation, he had sent an architect thither, to add a new apartment to the monastery, for his accommodation; but he gave strict orders, that the style of the building should be such as suited his present situation rather than his former dignity. It consisted only of six rooms; four of them in the form of friars' cells, with naked walls; the other two, each twenty feet square, were hung with brown cloth, and furnished in the most simple manner. They were all on a level with the ground; with a door on one side, into a garden, of which Charles himself had given the plan, and which he had filled with various plants, intending to cultivate them with his own hands. On the other side, they communicated with the chapel of the monastery, in which he was to perform his devotions. In this humble retreat, hardly sufficient

for the comfortable accommodation of a private gentleman, did Charles enter, with twelve domestics only. He buried there, in solitude and silence, his grandeur, his ambition, together with all those vast projects which, during half a century, had alarmed and agitated Europe, filling every kingdom in it, by turns, with the terror of his arms, and the dread of being subjected to his power.

Robertson.

§ 255. *An Account of MULY MOLUC.*

When Don Sebastian, king of Portugal, had invaded the territories of Muly Moluc, emperor of Morocco, in order to dethrone him, and set his crown upon the head of his nephew, Moluc was wearing away with a distemper which he himself knew was incurable. However, he prepared for the reception of so formidable an enemy. He was indeed so far spent with his sickness, that he did not expect to live out the whole day, when the last decisive battle was given; but knowing the fatal consequences that would happen to his children and people, in case he should die before he put an end to that war, he commanded his principal officers, that if he died during the engagement, they should conceal his death from the army, and that they should ride up to the litter in which his corpse was carried, under pretence of receiving orders from him as usual. Before the battle begun, he was carried through all the ranks of his army in an open litter, as they stood drawn up in array, encouraging them to fight valiantly in defence of their religion and country. Finding afterwards the battle to go against him, though he was very near his last agonies, he threw himself out of his litter, rallied his army, and led them on to the charge; which afterwards ended in a complete victory on the side of the Moors. He had no sooner brought his men to the engagement, but finding himself utterly spent, he was again replaced in his litter, where laying his finger on his mouth, to enjoin secrecy to his officers, who stood about him, he died a few moments after in that posture.

Speñator.

§ 256. *An Account of VALENTINE and UNNION.*

At the siege of Namur by the allies, there were in the ranks of the company commanded by captain Pincent, in colonel Frederic Hamilton's regiment, one Unnion, a corporal, and one Valentine, a private

vate centinel : there happened between these two men a dispute about an affair of love, which, upon some aggravations, grew to an irreconcilable hatred. Union being the officer of Valentine, took all opportunities even to strike his rival, and profess the spite and revenge which moved him to it. The centinel bore it without resistance ; but frequently said, he would die to be revenged of that tyrant. They had spent whole months in this manner, the one injuring, the other complaining ; when, in the midst of this rage towards each other, they were commanded upon the attack of the castle, where the corporal received a shot in the thigh, and fell ; the French pressing on, and he expecting to be trampled to death, called out to his enemy, " Ah, Valentine ! can you leave me here ? " Valentine immediately ran back, and in the midst of a thick fire of the French, took the corporal upon his back, and brought him through all that danger as far as the abbey of Sal-sine, where a cannon ball took off his head : his body fell under his enemy whom he was carrying off. Union immediately forgot his wound, rose up, tearing his hair, and then threw himself upon the bleeding carcass, crying, " Ah Valentine ! was it for me, who have so barbarously used thee, that thou hast died ? I will not live after thee." He was not by any means to be forced from the body, but was removed with it bleeding in his arms, and attended with tears by all their comrades who knew their enmity. When he was brought to a tent, his wounds were dressed by force ; but the next day, still calling upon Valentine, and lamenting his cruelties to him, he died in the pangs of remorse. *Tatler.*

§ 257. *An Example of Historical Narration from SALLUST.*

The Trojans (if we may believe tradition) were the first founders of the Roman commonwealth ; who, under the conduct of Æneas, having made their escape from their own ruined country, got to Italy, and there for some time lived a rambling and unsettled life, without any fixed place of abode, among the natives, an uncultivated people, who had neither law nor regular government, but were wholly free from all rule or restraint. This mixed multitude, however, crowding together into one city, though originally different in extraction, language, and customs, united into one body, in a surprisingly short space of time.

And as their little state came to be improved by additional numbers, by policy, and by extent of territory, and seemed likely to make a figure among the nations, according to the common course of things, the appearance of prosperity drew upon them the envy of the neighbouring states ; so that the princes and people who bordered upon them, began to seek occasions of quarrelling with them. The alliances they could form were but few : for most of the neighbouring states avoided embroiling themselves on their account. The Romans, seeing that they had nothing to trust to but their own conduct, found it necessary to bestir themselves with great diligence, to make vigorous preparations, to excite one another to face their enemies in the field, to hazard their lives in defence of their liberty, their country, and their families. And when, by their valour, they repulsed the enemy, they gave assistance to their allies, and gained friendships by often giving, and seldom demanding, favours of that sort. They had, by this time, established a regular form of government, to wit, the monarchical. And a senate, consisting of men advanced in years, and grown wise by experience, though infirm of body, consulted with their kings upon all important matters, and, on account of their age, and care of their country, were called fathers. Afterwards, when kingly power, which was originally established for the preservation of liberty, and the advantage of the state, came to degenerate into lawless tyranny, they found it necessary to alter the form of government, and to put the supreme power into the hands of two chief magistrates, to be held for one year only ; hoping, by this contrivance, to prevent the bad effects naturally arising from the exorbitant licentiousness of princes, and the indefeasible tenure by which they generally imagine they hold their sovereignty, &c. *Sall. Bell. Catilinar.*

§ 258. *The Story of DAMON and PYTHIAS.*

Damon and Pythias, of the Pythagorean sect in philosophy, lived in the time of Dionysius, the tyrant of Sicily. Their mutual friendship was so strong, that they were ready to die for one another. One of the two (for it is not known which) being condemned to death by the tyrant, obtained leave to go into his own country, to settle his affairs, on condition that the other

other should consent to be imprisoned in his stead, and put to death for him, if he did not return before the day of execution. The attention of every one, and especially of the tyrant himself, was excited to the highest pitch; as every body was curious to see what should be the event of so strange an affair. When the time was almost elapsed, and he who was gone did not appear, the rashness of the other, whose sanguine friendship had put him upon running so seemingly desperate a hazard, was universally blamed. But he still declared, that he had not the least shadow of doubt in his mind of his friend's fidelity. The event shewed how well he knew him. He came in due time, and surrendered himself to that fate, which he had no reason to think he should escape; and which he did not desire to escape by leaving his friend to suffer it in his place. Such fidelity softened even the savage heart of Dionysius himself. He pardoned the condemned. He gave the two friends to one another; and begged that they would take himself in for a third.

Val. Max. Cic.

§ 259. *The Story of DIONYSIUS the Tyrant.*

Dionysius the tyrant of Sicily, shewed how far he was from being happy, even whilst he had abounded in riches, and all the pleasures which riches can procure. Damocles, one of his flatterers, was complimenting him upon his power, his treasures, and the magnificence of his royal state, and affirming, that no monarch ever was greater or happier than he. "Have you a mind, Damocles," says the king, "to taste this happiness, and know by experience, what my enjoyments are, of which you have so high an idea?" Damocles gladly accepted the offer. Upon which the king ordered, that a royal banquet should be prepared, and a gilded couch placed for him, covered with rich embroidery, and sideboards loaded with gold and silver plate of immense value. Pages of extraordinary beauty were ordered to wait on him at table; and to obey his commands with the greatest readiness, and the most profound submission. Neither ointments, chaplets of flowers, nor rich perfumes were wanting. The table was loaded with the most exquisite delicacies of every kind. Damocles fancied himself amongst the gods. In the midst of all his happiness, he sees, let down from the roof exactly over his neck

as he lay indulging himself in state, a glittering sword hung by a single hair. The sight of destruction thus threatening him from on high, soon put a stop to his joy and revelling. The pomp of his attendance, and the glitter of the carved plate, gave him no longer any pleasure. He dreads to stretch forth his hand to the table. He throws off the chaplet of roses. He hastens to remove from his dangerous situation, and at last begs the king to restore him to his former humble condition, having no desire to enjoy any longer such a dreadful kind of happiness.

Cic. Tuscul. Quest.

§ 260. *A remarkable Instance of filial Duty.*

The prætor had given up to the triumvir a woman of some rank, condemned, for a capital crime, to be executed in the prison. He who had charge of the execution, in consideration of her birth, did not immediately put her to death. He even ventured to let her daughter have access to her in prison; carefully searching her, however, as she went in, lest she should carry with her any sustenance; concluding, that in a few days the mother must of course perish for want, and that the severity of putting a woman of family to a violent death, by the hand of the executioner, might thus be avoided. Some days passing in this manner, the triumvir began to wonder that the daughter still came to visit her mother, and could by no means comprehend, how the latter should live so long. Watching, therefore, carefully, what passed in the interview between them, he found, to his great astonishment, that the life of the mother had been, all this while, supported by the milk of the daughter, who came to the prison every day, to give her mother her breasts to suck. The strange contrivance between them was represented to the judges, and procured a pardon for the mother. Nor was it thought sufficient to give to so dutiful a daughter the forfeited life of her condemned mother, but they were both maintained afterwards by a pension settled on them for life. And the ground upon which the prison stood was consecrated, and a temple to filial piety built upon it.

What will not filial duty contrive, or what hazards will it not run, if it will put a daughter upon venturing, at the peril of her own life, to maintain her imprisoned and condemned mother in so unusual a manner!

manner! For what was ever heard of more strange, than a mother sucking the breasts of her own daughter? It might even seem so unnatural as to render it doubtful whether it might not be, in some sort, wrong, if it were not that duty to parents is the first law of nature.

Val. Max. Plin.

§ 261. *The Continence of SCIPIO AFRICANUS.*

The soldiers, after the taking of New Carthage, brought before Scipio a young lady of such distinguished beauty, that she attracted the eyes of all wherever she went. Scipio, by enquiring concerning her country and parents, among other things learned, that she was betrothed to Allucius, prince of the Celtiberians. He immediately ordered her parents and bridegroom to be sent for. In the mean time he was informed, that the young prince was so excessively enamoured of his bride, that he could not survive the loss of her. For this reason, as soon as he appeared, and before he spoke to her parents, he took great care to talk with him. "As you and I are both young," said he, "we can converse together with greater freedom. When your bride, who had fallen into the hands of my soldiers, was brought before me, I was informed that you loved her passionately; and, in truth, her perfect beauty left me no room to doubt of it. If I were at liberty to indulge a youthful passion, I mean honourable and lawful wedlock, and were not solely engrossed by the affairs of my republic, I might have hoped to have been pardoned my excessive love for so charming a mistress. But as I am situated, and have it in my power, with pleasure I promote your happiness. Your future spouse has met with as civil and modest treatment from me, as if she had been amongst her own parents, who are soon to be yours too. I have kept her pure, in order to have it in my power to make you a present worthy of you and of me. The only return I ask of you for this favour is, that you will be a friend to the Roman people; and that if you believe me to be a man of worth, as the states of Spain formerly experienced my father and uncle to be, you may know there are many of Rome who resemble us; and there are not a people in the

"universe, whom you ought less to desire to be an enemy, or more a friend, to you or yours." The youth, covered with blushes, and full of joy, embraced Scipio's hands, praying the immortal gods to reward him, as he himself was not capable to do it in the degree he himself desired, or he deserved. Then the parents and relations of the virgin were called. They had brought a great sum of money to ransom her. But seeing her restored without it, they began to beg Scipio to accept that sum as a present; protesting they would acknowledge it as a favour, as much as they did the restoring the virgin without injury offered to her. Scipio, unable to resist their importunate solicitations, told them, he accepted it; and ordering it to be laid at his feet, thus addressed Allucius: "To the portion you are to receive from your father-in-law, I add this, and beg you would accept it as a nuptial present." So he desired him to take up the gold, and keep it for himself. Transported with joy at the presents and honours conferred on him, he returned home, and expatiated to his countrymen on the merits of Scipio. "There is come amongst us," said he, "a young hero, like the gods, who conquers all things as well by generosity and beneficence, as by arms." For this reason, having raised troops among his own subjects, he returned a few days after to Scipio with a body of 1400 horse. *Livy.*

§ 262. *The private Life of ÆMILIUS SCIPIO.*

The taking of Numantia, which terminated a war that disgraced the Roman name, completed Scipio's military exploits. But in order to have a more perfect idea of his merit and character, it seems that, after having seen him at the head of armies, in the tumult of battles, and in the pomp of triumphs, it will not be lost labour to consider him in the repose of a private life, in the midst of his friends, family, and household. The truly great man ought to be so in all things. The magistrate, general, and prince, may constrain themselves, whilst they are in a manner exhibiting themselves as spectacles to the public, and appear quite different from what they really are. But reduced to themselves, and without the witnesses who force them to wear the mask, all their lustre, like the pomp of the theatre, often abandons them, and

and leaves little more to be seen in them than meanness and narrowness of mind.

Scipio did not depart from himself in any respect. He was not like certain paintings, that are to be seen only at a distance: he could not but gain by a nearer view. The excellent education which he had had, through the care of his father Paulus Æmilius, who had provided him with the most learned masters of those times, as well in polite learning as the sciences; and the instructions he had received from Polybius, enabled him to fill up the vacant hours he had from public affairs profitably, and to support the leisure of a private life, with pleasure and dignity. This is the glorious testimony given of him by an historian: "Nobody knew better how to mingle leisure and action, nor to use the intervals of rest from public business with more elegance and taste. Divided between arms and books, between the military labours of the camp, and the peaceful occupations of the closet, he either exercised his body in the dangers and fatigues of war, or his mind in the study of the sciences*."

The first Scipio Africanus used to say, That he was never less idle, than when at leisure, or less alone, than when alone. A fine saying, cries Cicero, and well worthy of that great man. And it shews that, even when inactive, he was always employed; and that when alone, he knew how to converse with himself. A very extraordinary disposition in persons accustomed to motion and agitation, whom leisure and solitude, when they are reduced to them, plunge into a disgust for every thing, and fill with melancholy; so that they are displeased in every thing with themselves, and sink under the heavy burden of having nothing to do. This saying of the first Scipio seems to me to suit the second still better, who having the advantage of the other by being educated in a taste for polite learning and the sciences, found in that a great resource against the inconvenience of which we have been speaking. Besides which, having usually Polybius and Panætius with him, even in the field, it is easy to judge that his house was open, in times of peace, to all the learned. Every body knows, that the comedies of Terence, the most accomplished work of that kind Rome ever pro-

duced, for natural elegance and beauties, are ascribed to him and Lælius, of whom we shall soon speak. It was publicly enough reported, that they assisted that poet in the composition of his pieces; and Terence himself makes it an honour to him in the prologue to the *Adelphi*. I shall undoubtedly not advise any body, and least of all persons of Scipio's rank, to write comedies. But on this occasion, let us only consider taste in general for letters. Is there a more ingenuous, a more affecting pleasure, and one more worthy of a wise and virtuous man, I might perhaps add, or one more necessary to a military person, than that which results from reading works of wit, and from the conversation of the learned? Providence thought fit, according to the observation of a Pagan, that he should be above those trivial pleasures, to which persons without letters, knowledge, curiosity, and taste for reading, are obliged to give themselves up.

Another kind of pleasure, still more sensible, more warm, more natural, and more implanted in the heart of man, constituted the greatest felicity of Scipio's life; this was that of friendship; a pleasure seldom known by great persons or princes, because, generally loving only themselves, they do not deserve to have friends. However, this is the most grateful tie of human society; so that the poet Ennius says with great reason, that to live without friends is not to live. Scipio had undoubtedly a great number of them, and those very illustrious: but I shall speak here only of Lælius, whose probity and prudence acquired him the surname of the Wise.

Never, perhaps, were two friends better suited to each other than those great men. They were almost of the same age, and had the same inclination, benevolence of mind, taste for learning of all kinds, principles of government, and zeal for the public good. Scipio, no doubt, took place in point of military glory; but Lælius did not want merit of that kind; and Cicero tells us, that he signalized himself very much in the war with Viriathus. As to the talents of the mind, the superiority, in respect of eloquence, seems to have been given to Lælius; though Cicero does not agree that it was due to him, and says, that Lælius's style favoured more of the ancient manner, and had something less agreeable in it than that of Scipio.

Let us hear Lælius himself (that is the words

* Velleius Paterculus.

words Cicero puts into his mouth) upon the strict union which subsisted between Scipio and him. "As for me," says Lælius, "of all the gifts of nature or fortune, there are none, I think, comparable to the happiness of having Scipio for my friend. I found in our friendship a perfect conformity of sentiments in respect to public affairs; an inexhaustible fund of counsels and supports in private life; with a tranquillity and delight not to be expressed. I never gave Scipio the least offence, to my knowledge, nor ever heard a word escape him that did not please me. We had but one house, and one table at our common expence, the frugality of which was equally the taste of both. In war, in travelling, in the country, we were always together. I do not mention our studies, and the attention of us both always to learn something; this was the employment of all our leisure hours, removed from the fight and commerce of the world."

Is there any thing comparable to a friendship like that which Lælius has just described? What a consolation is it to have a second self, to whom we have nothing secret, and in whose heart we may pour out our own with perfect effusion! Could we taste prosperity so sensibly, if we had no one to share in our joy with us? And what a relief is it in adversity, and the accidents of life, to have a friend still more affected with them than ourselves! What highly exalts the value of the friendship we speak of, was its not being founded at all upon interest, but solely upon esteem for each other's virtues. "What occasion," says Lælius, "could Scipio have of me? Undoubtedly none; nor I of him. But my attachment to him was the effect of my high esteem and admiration of his virtues; and his to me arose from the favourable idea of my character and manners. The friendship increased afterwards upon both sides, by habit and commerce. We both, indeed, derived great advantages from it; but those were not our view, when we began to love each other."

I cannot place the famous embassy of Scipio Africanus into the East and Egypt, better than here; we shall see the same taste of simplicity and modesty, as we have just been representing in his private life, shine out in it. It was a maxim with the Romans, frequently to send ambassadors to their allies, to take cognizance of their

affairs, and to accommodate their differences. It was with this view that three illustrious persons, P. Scipio Africanus, Sp. Mummius, and L. Metellus, were sent into Egypt, where Ptolemy Phylon then reigned, the most cruel tyrant mentioned in history. They had orders to go from thence to Syria, which the indolence, and afterwards the captivity of Demetrius Nicanor amongst the Parthians, made a prey to troubles, factions, and revolts. They were next to visit Asia Minor and Greece; to inspect into the affairs of those countries; to inquire into what manner the treaties made with the Romans were observed; and to remedy, as far as possible, all the disorders that should come to their knowledge. They acquitted themselves with so much equity, wisdom, and ability, and did such great services to those to whom they were sent, in re-establishing order amongst them, and in accommodating their differences, that, when they returned to Rome, ambassadors arrived there from all the parts in which they had been, to thank the senate for having sent persons of such great merit to them, whose wisdom and goodness they could not sufficiently commend.

The first place to which they went, according to their instructions, was Alexandria. The king received them with great magnificence. As for them, they affected it so little, that at their entry, Scipio, who was the richest and most powerful person of Rome, had only one friend, the philosopher Panætius, with him, and five domestics. His victories, says an ancient writer, and not his attendants, were considered; and his personal virtues and qualities were esteemed in him, and not the glitter of gold and silver.

Though, during their whole stay in Egypt, the king caused their table to be covered with the most exquisite provisions of every kind, they never touched any but the most simple and common, despising all the rest, which only serve to soften the mind and enervate the body. — But, on such occasions, ought not the ambassadors of so powerful a state as Rome to have sustained its reputation of majesty in a foreign nation, by appearing in public with a numerous train and magnificent equipages? This was not the taste of the Romans, that is, of the people that, among all nations of the earth, thought the most justly of true greatness and solid glory.

Rollin.

§ 263. *On Punctuation.*

Punctuation is the art of marking in writing the several pauses, or rests, between sentences and the parts of sentences, according to their proper quantity or proportion, as they are expressed in a just and accurate pronunciation.

As the several articulate sounds, the syllables and words, of which sentences consist, are marked by letters; so the rests and pauses, between sentences and their parts, are marked by Points.

But, though the several articulate sounds are pretty fully and exactly marked by letters of known and determinate power; yet the several pauses, which are used in a just pronunciation of discourse, are very imperfectly expressed by Points.

For the different degrees of connexion between the several parts of sentences, and the different pauses in a just pronunciation, which express those degrees of connexion according to their proper value, admit of great variety; but the whole number of Points, which we have to express this variety, amounts only to four.

Hence it is, that we are under a necessity of expressing pauses of the same quantity, on different occasions, by different Points; and more frequently, of expressing pauses of different quantity by the same Points.

So that the doctrine of Punctuation must needs be very imperfect: few precise rules can be given which will hold without exception in all cases; but much must be left to the judgment and taste of the writer.

On the other hand, if a greater number of marks were invented to express all the possible different pauses of pronunciation; the doctrine of them would be very perplexed and difficult, and the use of them would rather embarrass than assist the reader.

It remains, therefore, that we be content with the rules of Punctuation, laid down with as much exactness as the nature of the subject will admit: such as may serve for a general direction, to be accommodated to different occasions; and to be supplied, where deficient, by the writer's judgment.

The several degrees of connexion between sentences, and between their principal constructive parts, Rhetoricians have considered under the following distinctions,

as the most obvious and remarkable: the Period, Colon, Semicolon, and Comma.

The Period is the whole sentence, complete in itself, wanting nothing to make a full and perfect sense, and not connected in construction with a subsequent sentence.

The Colon, or Member, is a chief constructive part, or greater division, of a sentence.

The Semicolon or Half-member, is a less constructive part, or subdivision, of a sentence or member.

A sentence or member is again subdivided into Commas, or Segments; which are the least constructive parts of a sentence or member, in this way of considering it; for the next subdivision would be the resolution of it into phrases and words.

The Grammarians have followed this division of the Rhetoricians, and have appropriated to each of these distinctions its mark, or point; which takes its name from the part of the sentence which it is employed to distinguish: as follows:

The Period	} is thus marked {	.
The Colon		:
The Semicolon		;
The Comma		,

The proportional quantity, or time, of the points, with respect to one another, is determined by the following general rule: The Period is a pause in quantity or duration double of the Colon: the Colon is double of the Semicolon; and the Semicolon is double of the Comma. So that they are in the same proportion to one another, as the Semibreve, the Minim, the Crotchet, and the Quaver, in music. The precise quantity, or duration, of each pause or note cannot be defined; for that varies with the time: and both in discourse and music the same composition may be rehearsed in a quicker or a slower time: but in music the proportion between the notes remains ever the same; and in discourse, if the doctrine of Punctuation were exact, the proportion between the pauses would be ever invariable.

The Points then being designed to express the pauses, which depend on the different degrees of connexion between sentences, and between their principal constructive parts; in order to understand the meaning of the Points, and to know how to apply them properly, we must consider the nature of a sentence, as divided into its principal constructive parts, and the degrees of connexion

nexion between those parts upon which such division of it depends.

To begin with the least of these principal constructive parts, the Comma. In order the more clearly to determine the proper application of the Point which marks it, we must distinguish between an imperfect phrase, a simple sentence, and a compounded sentence.

An imperfect phrase contains no assertion, or does not amount to a proposition or sentence.

A simple sentence has but one subject, and one finite verb.

A compounded sentence has more than one subject, or one finite verb, either expressed or understood: or it consists of two or more simple sentences connected together.

In a sentence, the subject and the verb may be each of them accompanied with several adjuncts; as the object, the end, the circumstances of time, place, manner, and the like; and the subject or verb may be either immediately connected with them, or mediately; that is, by being connected with some thing, which is connected with some other; and so on.

If the several adjuncts affect the subject or the verb in a different manner, they are only so many imperfect phrases; and the sentence is simple.

A simple sentence admits of no point, by which it may be divided, or distinguished into parts.

If the several adjuncts affect the subject or the verb in the same manner, they may be resolved into so many simple sentences; the sentence then becomes compounded, and it must be divided into its parts by Points.

For, if there are several subjects belonging in the same manner to one verb, or several verbs belonging in the same manner to one subject, the subjects and verbs are still to be accounted equal in number: for every verb must have its subject, and every subject its verb; and every one of the subjects, or verbs, should or may have its point or distinction.

Examples:

"The passion for praise produces excellent effects in women of sense." Addison, Spect. N^o 73. In this sentence *passion* is the subject, and *produces* the verb; each of which is accompanied and connected with its adjuncts. The subject is not passion in general, but a particular passion deter-

mined by its adjunct of specification, as we may call it; the passion *for praise*. So likewise the verb is immediately connected with its object, *excellent effects*; and mediately, that is, by the intervention of the word *effects*, with *women*, the subject in which these effects are produced; which again is connected with its adjunct of specification; for it is not meant of women in general, but of women *of sense only*. Lastly, it is to be observed, that the verb is connected with each of these several adjuncts in a different manner; namely with *effects*, as the object; with *women*, as the subject of them; with *sense*, as the quality or characteristic of those women. The adjuncts therefore are only so many imperfect phrases; the sentence is a simple sentence, and admits of no point, by which it may be distinguished into parts.

"The passion for praise, which is so very vehement in the fair sex, produces excellent effects in women of sense." Here a new verb is introduced, accompanied with adjuncts of its own; and the subject is repeated by the relative pronoun *which*. It now becomes a compounded sentence, made up of two simple sentences, one of which is inserted in the middle of the other; it must therefore be distinguished into its component parts by a point placed on each side of the additional sentence.

"How many instances have we [in the fair sex] of chastity, fidelity, devotion! How many ladies distinguish themselves by the education of their children, care of their families, and love of their husbands; which are the great qualities and achievements of women-kind; as the making of war, the carrying on of traffic, the administration of justice, are those by which men grow famous, and get themselves a name!" *Ibid.*

In the first of these two sentences, the adjuncts *chastity, fidelity, devotion*, are connected with the verb by the word *instances* in the same manner, and in effect make so many distinct sentences: "how many instances have we of chastity! how many instances have we of fidelity! how many instances have we of devotion!" They must therefore be separated from one another by a point. The same may be said of the adjuncts, "education of their children, &c." in the former part of the next sentence: as likewise of the several subjects, "the making of war, &c." in the latter part; which have in effect each their verb; for

for each of these "is an atchievement by which men grow famous;"

As sentences themselves are divided into simple and compounded, so the members of sentences may be divided likewise into simple and compounded members: for whole sentences, whether simple or compounded, may become members of other sentences by means of some additional connexion.

Simple members of sentences closely connected together in one compounded member, or sentence, are distinguished or separated by a Comma: as in the foregoing examples.

So likewise, the case absolute; nouns in opposition, when consisting of many terms; the participle with something depending on it; are to be distinguished by the Comma: for they may be resolved into simple members.

When an address is made to a person, the noun, answering to the vocative case in Latin, is distinguished by a Comma.

Examples:

"This said, He form'd thee, Adam; thee, O man, Dust of the ground."

"Now morn, her rosy steps in th' eastern clime Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl."

Milton.

Two nouns, or two adjectives, connected by a single Copulative or Disjunctive, are not separated by a point: but when there are more than two, or where the conjunction is understood, they must be distinguished by a Comma.

Simple members connected by relatives, and comparatives, are for the most part, distinguished by a Comma: but when the members are short in comparative sentences; and when two members are closely connected by a relative, restraining the general notion of the antecedent to a particular sense; the pause becomes almost insensible, and the Comma is better omitted.

Examples:

"Raptures, transports, and extasies, are the rewards which they confer: sighs and tears, prayers and broken hearts, are the offerings which are paid to them."

Addison, ibid.

"Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust, Whose attributes were rage, revenge, or lust."

Pope.

"What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion?"

A circumstance, of importance, though no more than an imperfect phrase, may be set off with a Comma on each side, to give it greater force and distinction.

Example:

"The principle may be defective or faulty; but the consequences it produces are so good, that, for the benefit of mankind, it ought not to be extinguished."

Addison, ibid.

A member of a sentence, whether simple or compounded, that requires a greater pause than a Comma, yet does not of itself make a complete sentence, but is followed by something closely depending on it, may be distinguished by a Semicolon.

Example:

"But as this passion for admiration, when it works according to reason, improves the beautiful part of our species in every thing that is laudable; so nothing is more destructive to them, when it is governed by vanity and folly."

Addison, ibid.

Here the whole sentence is divided into two parts by the Semicolon; each of which parts is a compounded member, divided into its simple members by the Comma.

A member of a sentence, whether simple or compounded, which of itself would make a complete sentence, and so requires a greater pause than a Semicolon, yet is followed by an additional part making a more full and perfect sense, may be distinguished by a Colon.

Example:

"Were all books reduced to their quintessence, many a bulky author would make his appearance in a penny paper: there would be scarce any such thing in nature as a folio: the works of an age would be contained on a few shelves: not to mention millions of volumes that would be utterly annihilated." *Addison, Spect.* N^o 124.

Here the whole sentence is divided into four parts by Colons: the first and last of which are compounded members, each divided by a Comma; the second and third are simple members.

When a Semicolon has preceded, and a greater pause is still necessary; a Colon may

may be employed, though the sentence be incomplete.

The Colon is also commonly used, when an example, or a speech, is introduced.

When a sentence is so far perfectly finished, as not to be connected in construction with the following sentence, it is marked with a Period.

In all cases, the proportion of the several points in respect to one another is rather to be regarded, than their supposed precise quantity, or proper office, when taken separately.

Besides the points which mark the pauses in discourse, there are others which denote a different modulation of the voice in correspondence with the sense. These are

The Interrogation point, } thus marked {
The Exclamation point, }
The Parenthesis, } ()

The Interrogation and Exclamation Points are sufficiently explained by their names: they are indeterminate as to their quantity or time, and may be equivalent in that respect to a Semicolon, a Colon, or a Period, as the sense requires. They mark an elevation of the voice.

The Parenthesis incloses in the body of a sentence a member inserted into it, which is neither necessary to the sense, nor at all affects the construction. It marks a moderate depression of the voice, with a pause greater than a Comma. *Lowth,*

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